

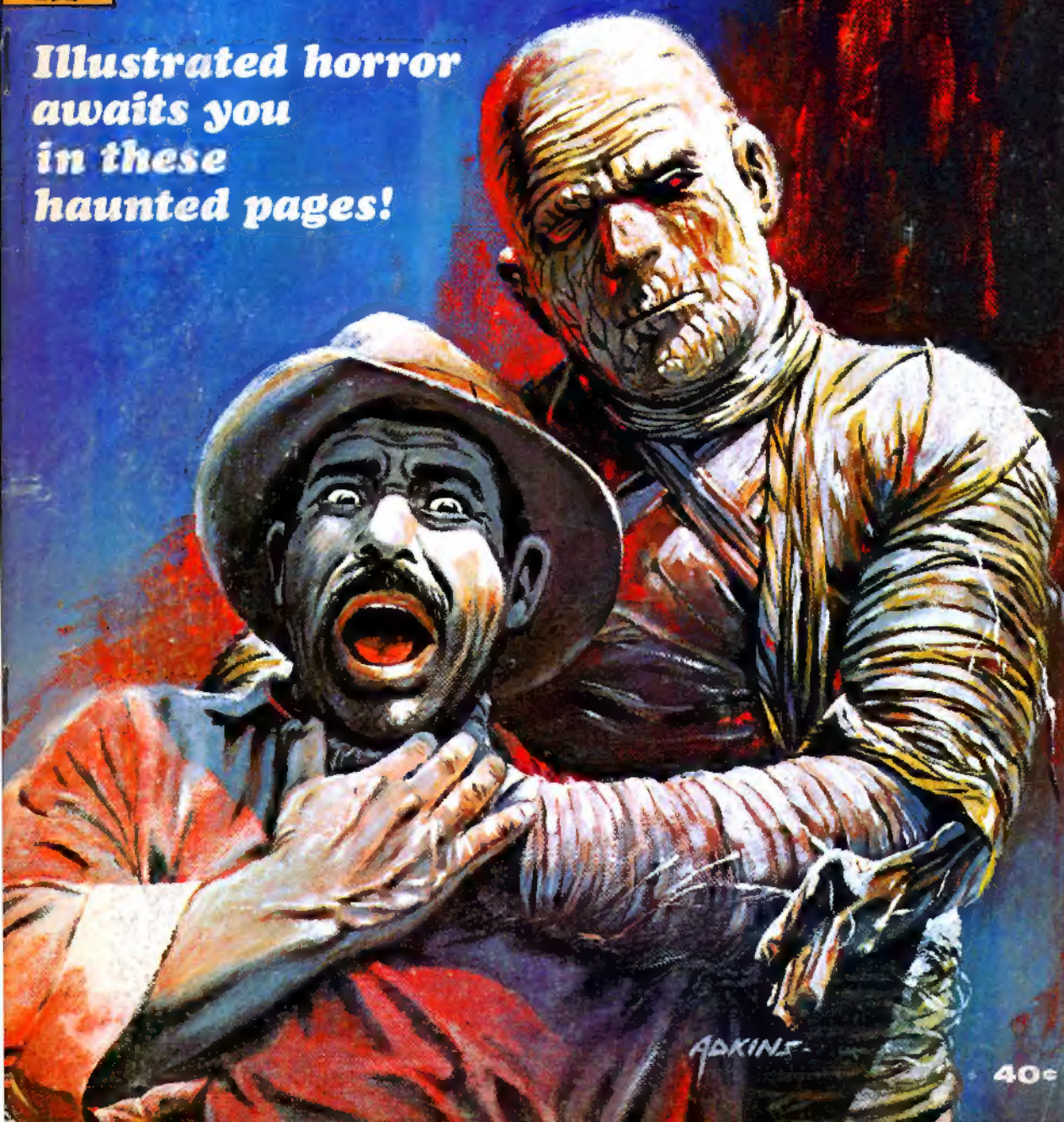


EERIE

PDC

EERIE
NOVEMBER
12

**Illustrated horror
awaits you
in these
haunted pages!**



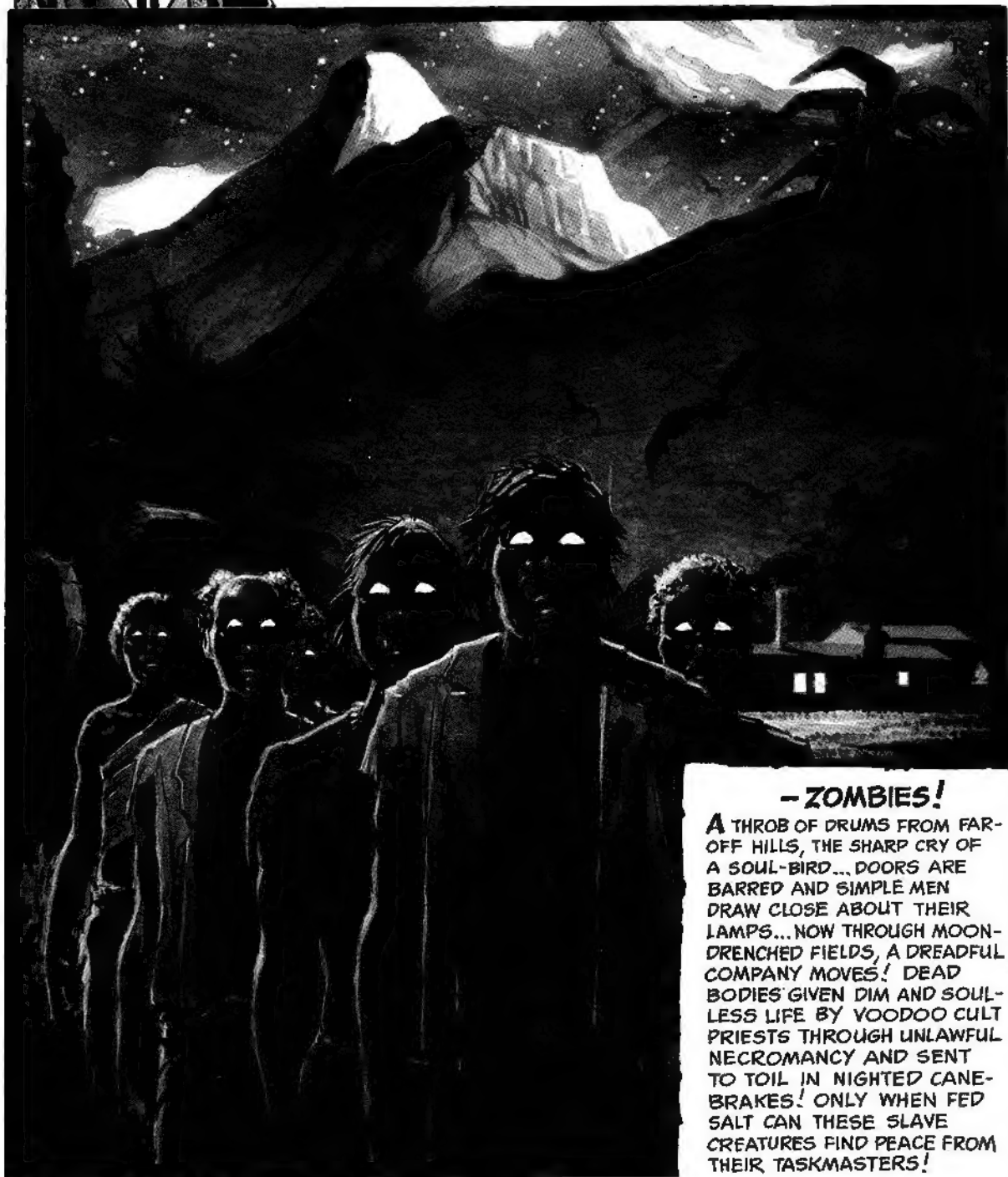
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HERE'S THE LATEST IN OUR SHRIEKING SERIES OF **MONSTROUS MASTERPIECES...** DUST OFF A SPOT ON THE WALL OF YOUR TOMB AND GET READY TO HANG THIS ENTRY IN...

EEBIE'S MONSTER GALLERY!



-ZOMBIES!

A THROB OF DRUMS FROM FAR-OFF HILLS, THE SHARP CRY OF A SOUL-BIRD... DOORS ARE BARRED AND SIMPLE MEN DRAW CLOSE ABOUT THEIR LAMPS... NOW THROUGH MOON-DRENCHED FIELDS, A DREADFUL COMPANY MOVES! DEAD BODIES GIVEN DIM AND SOUL-LESS LIFE BY VODOO CULT PRIESTS THROUGH UNLAWFUL NECROMANCY AND SENT TO TOIL IN NIGHTED CANE-BRAKES! ONLY WHEN FED SALT CAN THESE SLAVE CREATURES FIND PEACE FROM THEIR TASKMASTERS!

EERIE

NO. 12

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DEAR COUSIN EERIE



I thought issue #10 was exceptionally good. The best stories, in my opinion, were FOR THE BIRDS, HOUSE OF FIENDS, and VODOO DRUM. THE SLUGS and IT were okay. I thought WARRIOR OF DEATH was well drawn, but the script became boring. The cover was also well drawn. I think Alan Renfrow's idea (he stated that EERIE should be done in color) would make EERIE a "comic book" in the eyes of the readers. It looks excellent in black and white.

Ron Hackett
Oahu, Hawaii

The majority opinion of our fiendish fans would seem to back you up, Ron—CE

I am a college student and in my spare time, I enjoy reading horror magazines. The reason I enjoy your mag so well is that you have a serious approach to your generally well written stories. Most of the people who write to your book express an interest in the fine artwork you have. Well, I am mainly interested in the story material and as for your mag, they are great. What many people don't realize is that new and different angles are very difficult to come up with, and your writers do a superb job in thinking up interesting plots. In issue 10, your best written stories were: WARRIOR OF DEATH, HOUSE OF FIENDS, and FOR THE BIRDS. Your worst effort of this edition was VODOO DRUM. Even though I am no authority on art, I really dig the art of Eugene Colan.

Steve Dill
Missoula, Montana

After ripping apart the mag rack in a frantic effort to find EERIE #10, I came across it hidden between two other mags (some other fiend had hidden it there, I suppose). In my opinion, WARRIOR OF DEATH, HOUSE OF FIENDS, and the SLUGS were the best stories.

Steve Ditko and Jerry Grandenetti are fabulous artists. I truly enjoy vampire stories, so please have more of them in the future. I have one suggestion. Why don't you and Uncle Creepy have an EERIE and CREEPY ANNUAL, and you'd make us fellow monsters very happy.

Debbie Ward
Kelowna, Canada

Now you've done it, Debbie! Warren's been wondering how he was going to sneak a plug for the new CREEPY 1968 YEARBOOK (on sale now) into MY letters page, and you have given him the perfect chance. It contains weird works from ol' skindome's earliest issues, and some of them are almost as good as my own fear fables! Might as well buy it. It'll keep you awake until the next issue of my monstrous mag comes out—CE

I used to say horror comics were dead with EC comics, until I picked up EERIE. Eerie, as CREEPY, as BLAZING COMBAT, is great. Frazetta is the best painter since Mucha and Ditko the best drawer since Beardsley (that's not at random I picked up these names). Have Stan (the man) Lee and Jack (the king) Kirby do a story in the Dunsany way—Have more Wood and Williamson—Have—But I stop. You are so great now, that it is hard to become better...

Jean Pierre Dionnet
Livry-Gargan, France
PS—Excuse my very very bad English.

It sounds just great to us, Jean Pierre. You ought to hear Ghoulish Goodwin's french... Then again, in the interest of French-American relations, maybe you shouldn't!—CE

EERIE #10 was superb! One thing though: I've tried to look up "Wendigo" in a dictionary, encyclopedia, books and other sources of information and he's not there. Why? Did you make it up? WARRIOR OF DEATH wasn't good, and wasn't bad either. THE SLUGS was fair.

It was 2nd best to me. VODOO DRUM was best, and HOUSE OF FIENDS was so good I don't know how to describe it. One thing though: Was the old voodoo guy an old zendic?

Tom Weaver
Tarrytown, New York

ATTENTION: FIENDISH FANS!

Are you having trouble finding EERIE at your newsstand? Gnashing your fangs because you find the last copy sold out? Do friends keep clawing you because they can't get their own copies in their neighborhood?

Well, you can put an end to this wicked situation without violence or bloodshed. Just fill out the coupon below and send it to us TODAY! The problem will be taken care of, and we'll thank you from the bottom of our black little hearts!

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301 East 47 St., New York, New York 10017

We're not sure, Tom. We've tried looking "zendic" up in a dictionary, encyclopedia, books and other sources of information and he's not there—CE

I really hate to start right off with a complaint but your last issue, no. 11, started off pretty bad. The cover and first story weren't up to your usual standards. After being discouraged, I was met with the next story TO SLAY A DRAGON. Jeff Jones did a superb job on art and the story was great. I especially liked the way Mr. Jones paced his panels. It really adds!

Happy to see another adaptation, although it was a bit rushed, THE MUMMY stands as one of your best. BLOOD FRUIT was good, and so was THE MONSTER FROM ONE BILLION BC, but BIG CHANGE topped them all.

Please let Neal Adams do more stories, and I'd love to see him do a cover. Lastly, I was happy to see new advertisements, of all things. They always provide good reading.

Donald R. Page
Louisville, Kentucky

How in the world do you guys do it? Do you sit on a tombstone to inspire yourselves? However you do it, I must say you're quite something. Anyway, VODOO DRUM, FOR THE BIRDS, and WARRIOR OF DEATH made the best in issue #10. Credit must be given (don't give them anything else, they'll expect it every time) to Jerry Grandenetti, Don Adkins, and Neal Adams. Too bad I've only been reading your magazine since issue 7, I've lost a lot.

Miguel Motta
Fajardo, Puerto Rico

We admit we're quite something, Miguel. What KIND of something we're not so sure of—CE

Issue #11 was one of those half and half issues. Half good and half bad. The mistake that really bugs me was on the contents page. One of the titles that impressed me the most was IMAGE IN WAX. It was listed as being on page 38, was I shocked! Instead of IMAGE IN WAX, there was THE MONSTER FROM ONE BILLION BC! Please tell me, what ever happened to IMAGE IN WAX. The Adam's art was fabulous, just too much! BLOOD-FRUIT by Johnny Craig was the 2nd best story. I liked the tricky ending and the art was fabulous. FIRST BLOOD was tremendous, both in art and script. The story was perfect in every way, but the ending really choked me up! Last, but not least, the cover was very well done by Joe Orlando.

Bruce Beard
Montreal, Canada

Due to some last minute deadline problems, THE MONSTER FROM ONE MILLION BC had to be substituted for IMAGE IN WAX (both by Tom Sutton). But there wasn't time to make the correction on the Contents Page. Don't fret though, Bruce. You will be able to view IMAGE IN WAX amid the ghoulish goings-on in CREEPY #17—CE

THE SLUGS in EERIE 10 was good, but also sort of hard to understand. I'm glad you brought back Bill Pearson. I haven't heard of him since CREEPY #1. Archie Goodwin is a good horror writer, but he writes 9/10 of all the CREEPY and EERIE stories. He is used too much (or is it Tomb much?)

Bill Swank
Catlin, Illinois

Want to write us? Address your poison pen letters to: EERIE LETTERS, Dept. 12, 301 East 47 St., New York, N.Y. 10017

NOW, RABID READERS, WE DIP INTO THE PULSATING PAGES OF MACABRE MASTER
EDGAR ALLAN POE TO DRAW FORTH HIS CREEPY CLASSIC...

The MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH



THE RED DEATH HAD DEVASTATED THE COUNTRY. NO PESTILENCE HAD EVER BEEN SO FATAL, OR SO HIDEOUS. BLOOD WAS ITS AVATAR AND ITS SEAL... THE SCARLET STAINS UPON FACE AND BODY OF THE VICTIM WERE THE PEST BAN WHICH SHUT HIM OUT FROM THE AID AND SYMPATHY OF HIS FELLOW MEN...

FROM FIRST SEIZURE TO DEATH'S LAST RATTLE, TAKES BUT HALF AN HOUR... ONLY A MATTER OF TIME. AND THE RED DEATH'LL HAVE US ALL!

AYE, US... BUT NOT THEM! NOT PRINCE PROSPERO AND HIS FRIENDS, THEY'RE SEALED UP SAFE IN THE CASTLE! TODAY HIS COURTIERS WELDED SHUT THE GREAT IRON GATES!



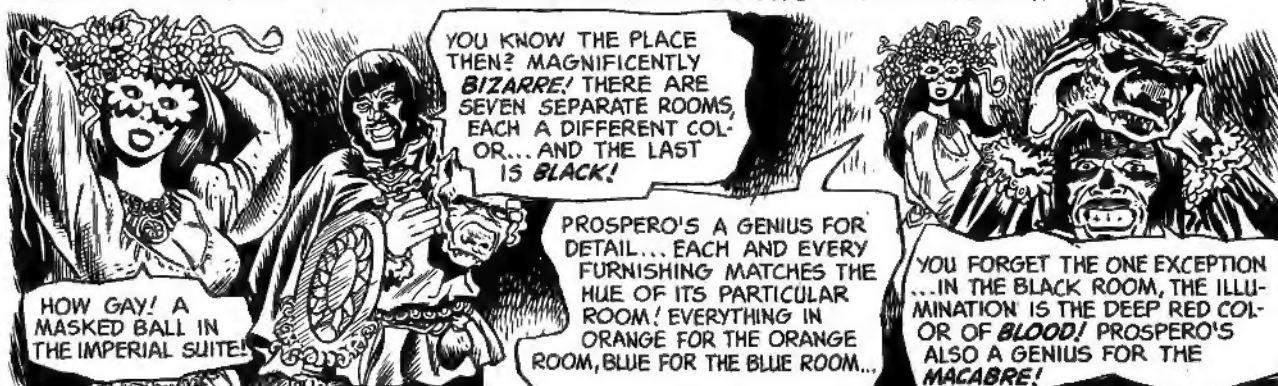
PRINCE PROSPERO WAS HAPPY AND DAUNTLESS; THE EXTERNAL WORLD COULD TAKE CARE OF ITSELF. IT WAS FOLLY TO GRIEVE OR THINK, AND AGAINST THIS PROSPERO HAD PROVIDED ALL THE APPLIANCES OF PLEASURE. ALL THESE AND SECURITY WAS WITHIN. WITHOUT WAS THE RED DEATH...



MY LORD HOST, WITH THE GATES SEALED THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM THE CASTLE...

MY LADY, WITH PROVISIONS SUCH AS THESE WHO'D WANT TO?! HA, HA!

IT WAS TOWARD THE CLOSE OF THE SIXTH MONTH OF THIS SECLUSION, WHILE THE PESTILENCE RAGED MOST FURIOUSLY ABROAD, THAT PRINCE PROSPERO ARRANGED AN UNUSUAL ENTERTAINMENT...



YOU KNOW THE PLACE THEN? MAGNIFICENTLY BIZARRE! THERE ARE SEVEN SEPARATE ROOMS, EACH A DIFFERENT COLOR... AND THE LAST IS BLACK!

PROSPERO'S A GENIUS FOR DETAIL... EACH AND EVERY FURNISHING MATCHES THE HUE OF ITS PARTICULAR ROOM! EVERYTHING IN ORANGE FOR THE ORANGE ROOM, BLUE FOR THE BLUE ROOM...

YOU FORGET THE ONE EXCEPTION... IN THE BLACK ROOM, THE ILLUMINATION IS THE DEEP RED COLOR OF BLOOD! PROSPERO'S ALSO A GENIUS FOR THE MACABRE!

HOW GAY! A MASKED BALL IN THE IMPERIAL SUITE!



AND THE PRINCE'S GENIUS WAS THE GUIDING TASTE THAT GAVE CHARACTER TO THE MASQUERADERS... THERE WAS MUCH OF THE BEAUTIFUL, MUCH OF THE WANTON, SOMETHING OF THE TERRIBLE, AND NOT A LITTLE OF THAT WHICH MIGHT HAVE EXCITED DISGUST...

DANCE! WRITHE! LIKE THE DREAM CREATURES I MEANT YOU TO BE! TO AND FRO, IN AND OUT... A MULTITUDE OF DREAMS TAKING HUE FROM MY ROOMS OF COLOR... DANCE! DANCE!

THE OTHER ROOMS WERE DENSELY CROWDED, BUT TO THE BLACK ROOM, NONE OF THE REVELERS WOULD VENTURE. WITHIN ITS SHROUDED WALLS THERE STOOD A GIGANTIC CLOCK OF EBONY. AS EACH HOUR WAS STRUCK, FROM THE BRAZEN LUNGS OF THE CLOCK CAME A SOUND OF SO PECULIAR A NOTE THAT THE MUSICIANS WERE CONSTRAINED TO PAUSE...

...AND EVEN THE GIDDIIEST OF THE DANCERS CEASED AND GREW PALE!



BUT WHEN THE ECHOS HAD FULLY CEASED, ALL SMILED AT THEIR OWN NERVOUSNESS AND MADE WHISPERING VOWS, EACH TO THE OTHER, THAT THE NEXT CHIMING OF THE CLOCK WOULD NOT FIND THEM AGAIN AFRAID...



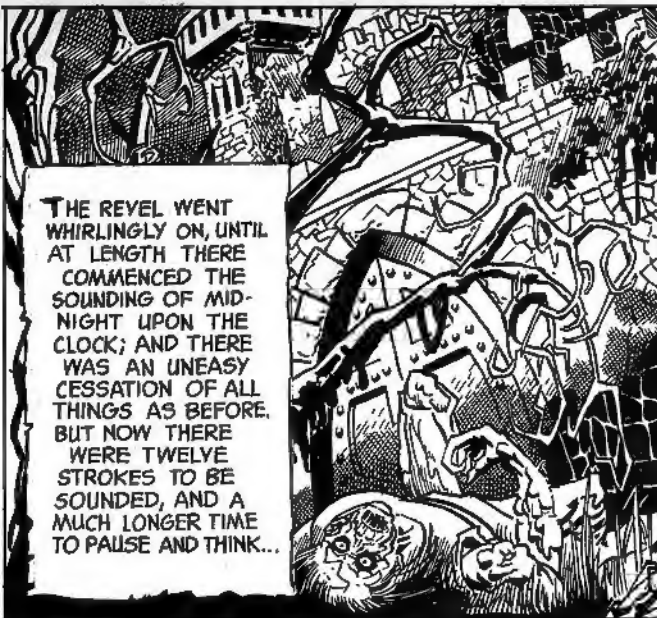
THEN, AGAIN, AFTER THE LAPSE OF SIXTY MINUTES WOULD COME THE NEXT OMINOUS CHIMING, AND WITH IT, THE SAME FEAR AND TREPIDATION!

BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG! BONG!

WHAT WHIMSEY OF PRINCE PROSPERO PROVIDED SUCH A TIMEPIECE TO TOLL THE HOUR? IT'S A MOST DEPRESSING SOUND.

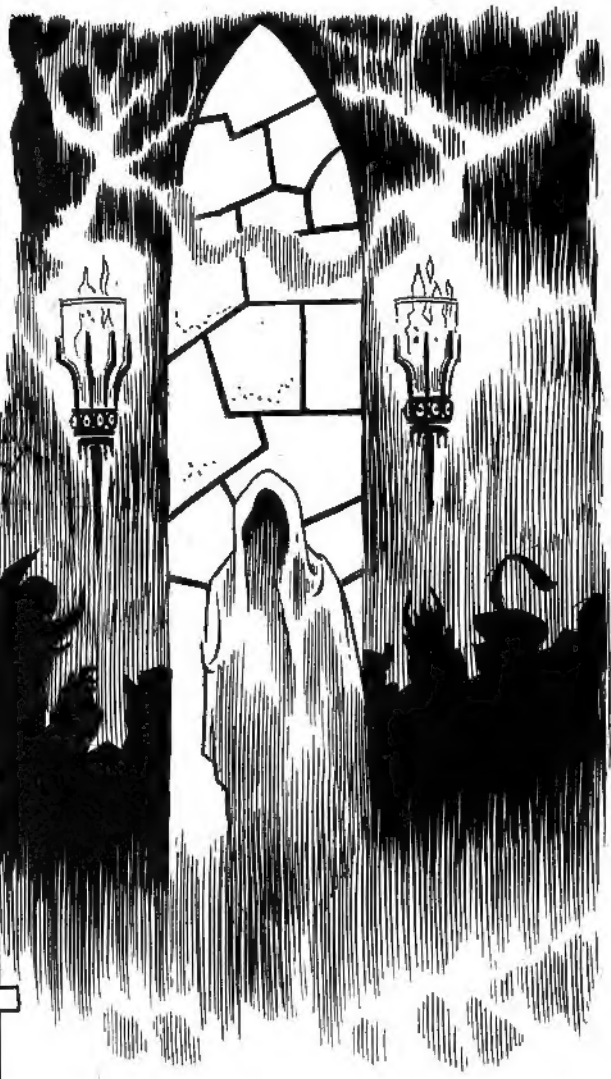
THE WHIMSEY OF A MAD-MAN SOME MIGHT SAY, M'LADY... THOUGH CERTAINLY I WOULD NOT! COME, FORGET... DANCE!





THE REVEL WENT WHIRLINGLY ON, UNTIL AT LENGTH THERE COMMENCED THE SOUNDING OF MID-NIGHT UPON THE CLOCK; AND THERE WAS AN UNEASY CESSATION OF ALL THINGS AS BEFORE. BUT NOW THERE WERE TWELVE STROKES TO BE SOUNDED, AND A MUCH LONGER TIME TO PAUSE AND THINK...

BEFORE THE LAST ECHOES OF THE LAST CHIME HAD UTTERLY SUNK INTO SILENCE, THE MOTIONLESS DANCERS BECAME AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF A MASKED FIGURE WHICH HAD ARRESTED THE ATTENTION OF NO SINGLE INDIVIDUAL BEFORE...



THERE AROSE AT LENGTH FROM THE WHOLE COMPANY A MURMUR OF FIRST SURPRISE, THEN TERROR, HORROR, AND FINALLY, DISGUST...



SIRE, THE FELLOW GOES TOO FAR! EVEN AMONG THE UTTERLY LOST TO WHOM LIFE AND DEATH ARE BOTH JOKES, THERE ARE MATTERS OF WHICH NO JEST CAN BE MADE!



ALL MIGHT HAVE BEEN ENDURED, IF NOT APPROVED BY THE MAD REVELLERS, BUT THE NEWCOMER HAD GONE SO FAR AS TO ASSUME THE COUNTENANCE OF THE RED DEATH... HIS VESTURE WAS DABBLED IN BLOOD AND HIS BROAD BROW, WITH ALL THE FEATURES OF THE FACE, WAS SPRINKLED WITH THE SCARLET HORROR!



WHO DARES INSULT US WITH THIS BLASPHEMOUS MOCKERY? SEIZE HIM AND UNMASK HIM!

BUT FROM A CERTAIN NAMELESS AWE WITH WHICH THE MADE ASSUMPTIONS OF THE FIGURE HAD INSPIRED THE WHOLE PARTY, THERE WERE NONE WHO PUT FORTH HAND TO SEIZE HIM...

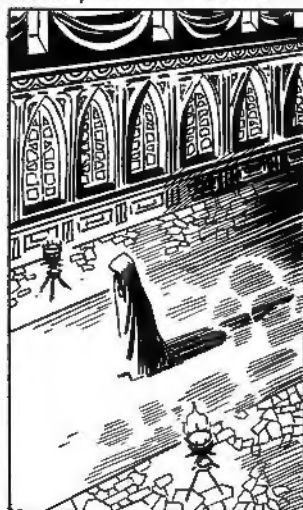


THEN, PRINCE PROSPERO, MADDENED WITH RAGE AND THE SHAME OF HIS OWN MOMENTARILY COWARDICE, RUSHED FORWARD...



FOOLS!
I'LL ATTEND TO
THIS INTRUDER
MYSELF!

WITH A SOLEMN AND MEASURED STEP, THE SILENT FIGURE MOVED FROM THE BLUE CHAMBER INTO THE PURPLE, THROUGH THE PURPLE TO THE GREEN, AND ON TO THE ORANGE, THEN THE WHITE...



... EVEN THENCE TO THE VIOLET ROOM...

MOCKING
KNAVE! YOU
CAN'T ESCAPE!
NOTHING LIES
BEYOND BUT THE
SEVENTH ROOM...



...THE BLACK
CHAMBER!



HAVING ATTAINED THE EXTREMITY OF THE BLACK CHAMBER, THE GRIM INTRUDER TURNED SUDDENLY A CONFRONTED HIS PURSUER!



HE'S SLAIN THE PRINCE!
CAPTURE HIM! STOP HIM!

SUMMONING THE WILD COURAGE OF DESPAIR, A THRONG OF REVELLERS HURLED THEMSELVES INTO THE BLACK COMPARTMENT WHERE THE GAUNT FIGURE STOOD ERECT AND MOTIONLESS WITHIN THE SHADOW OF THE EBONY CLOCK...

YET THE AVENGERS COULD ONLY GASP IN UNUTTERABLE HORROR AS THEY SEIZED THE MASQUERADER WITH VIOLENCE, AND FOUND THE GRAVE CEREMENTS AND CORPSE LIKE MASK UNTENANTED BY ANY TANGIBLE FORM!



AND NOW WAS ACKNOWLEDGED THE PRESENCE OF THE RED DEATH! HE HAD COME LIKE A THIEF IN THE NIGHT, AND ONE BY ONE DROPPED THE REVELLERS IN THE BLOOD BEDEWED HALLS OF THEIR REVEL, AND DIED EACH IN THE DESPAIRING POSTURE OF HIS FALL!



AND THE LIFE OF THE EBONY CLOCK WENT OUT WITH THAT OF THE LAST OF THE GAY, AND THE FLAMES OF THE TRIPODS EXPIRED, AND DARKNESS AND DECAY AND THE RED DEATH HELD ILLIMITABLE DOMINION OVER ALL!!

HOPE WE DIDN'T PLAGUE YOU TOO MUCH WITH THIS YELL YARN, FEAR-SOME FIENDIES, BUT IF WE DID... BOY, WILL YOUR FACE BE RED!





DON'T JUST STAND THERE ON THE WELCOME BAT, COME INTO MY ABOMINABLE ABODE FOR A TERRIFYING TRIP INTO THE CENTRAL AMERICAN JUNGLES, WHERE LURKS THE DEADLY VAMPIRE BAT... FOR REAL! IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, FLY OVER TO YOUR NEAREST DICTIONARY AND TAKE A PEEK. BUT FIRST, PREPARE YOURSELF WITH THIS TANTALIZING TALE OF THE VORACIOUS...

VAMPIRUS!



THREE WEEKS NOW, KAISER, *THREE WEEKS!* HEAT! RAIN! SNAKES! CROCODILES! EVERYTHING BUT THOSE BLASTED BATS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR!

THOSE BATS ARE THE CLUE TO A TREASURE LIKE NO MAN'S EVER SEEN BEFORE! I WARNED YOU FINDING IT WOULD BE NO PICNIC... WE CAN'T QUIT NOW!



YEAH, YEAH! VAMPIRE BATS! BAT WORSHIPPERS! MAYAN GOLD! BETTER WE LOOK FOR THE END OF THE NEXT RAINBOW!

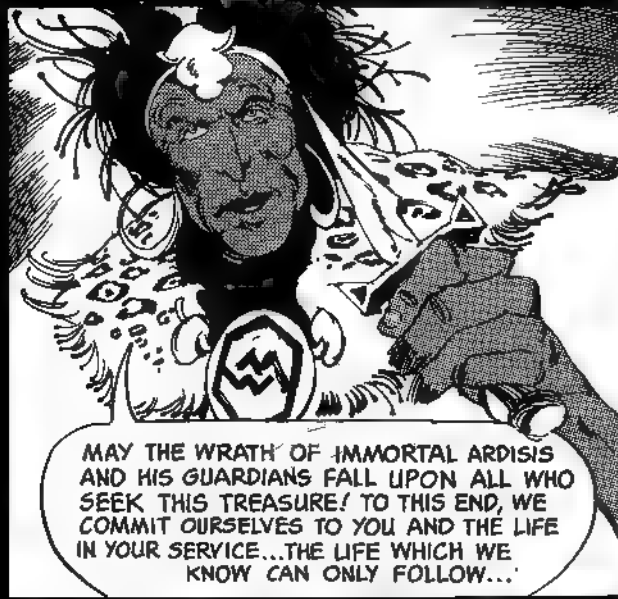
RAINBOW'S ARE FOR FOOLS, RISING... WE'RE DEALING WITH FACTS...



IN 1524, A SPANISH CAPTAIN, PETER DE ALVARADO, INVADDED AND CONQUERED THE LAST STRONGHOLD OF THE RICH MAYAN INDIANS, BUT SOME SMALL GROUPS ESCAPED INTO THE JUNGLE AND WERE NEVER FOUND...



"ACCORDING TO LEGEND, ONE GROUP, LOADED WITH VAST RICHES, AND LED BY THE HIGH PRIEST AZEPHE-TE, FLED TO A HIDDEN TEMPLE TO ENTRUST THEIR WEALTH TO ARDISIS, THE BAT GOD..."



MAY THE WRATH OF IMMORTAL ARDISIS AND HIS GUARDIANS FALL UPON ALL WHO SEEK THIS TREASURE! TO THIS END, WE COMMIT OURSELVES TO YOU AND THE LIFE IN YOUR SERVICE...THE LIFE WHICH WE KNOW CAN ONLY FOLLOW...

HEAR US, ARDISIS... YOUR HUMBLE SERVANT, AZEPHE-TE, IS PURSUED BY UNBELIEVERS WHO WOULD ENSLAVE YOUR PEOPLE AND STEAL YOUR TREASURES!

...DEATH!



"BUT APPARENTLY, ONE OF AZEPHE-TE'S FOLLOWERS WASN'T KEEN ON THE IDEA OF SLAYING HIMSELF AND FLED FROM THE TEMPLE, PREFERING TO BE A LIVE SLAVE OF THE SPANIARDS RATHER THAN A DEAD BAT WORSHIPPER!"



"WHEN ALVARADO'S TROOPS FOUND HIM, HE WAS NEARLY DEAD FROM EXPOSURE. HE MANAGED TO TELL THAT MUCH OF THE STORY BEFORE HE DIED, BUT THERE'S NO INDICATION THE SPANIARDS EVER FOUND THE TEMPLE..."



SO YOU THINK AFTER NEARLY 450 YEARS WE'LL DO BETTER THAN THE SPANISH ARMY?



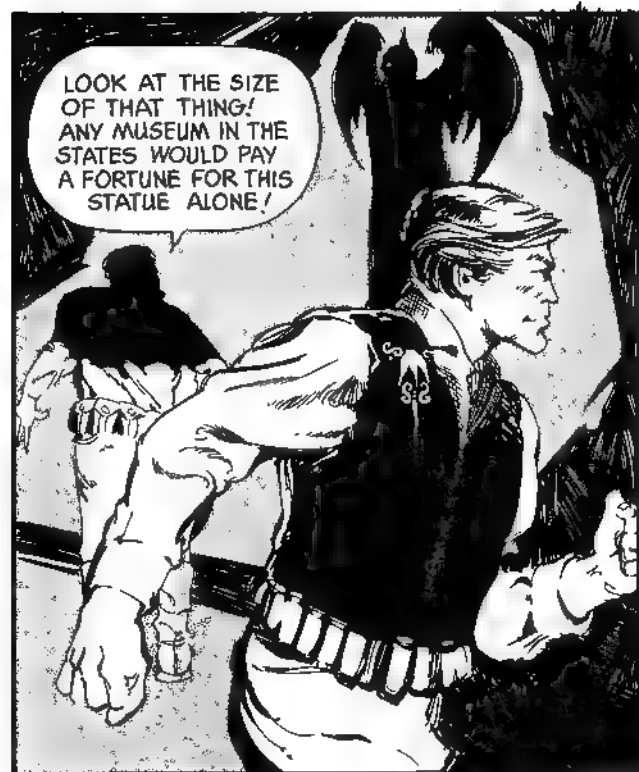
I DON'T THINK THEY PURSUED IT AS WE'RE DOING... THEY SACKED MANY VILLAGES, ONE SMALL GROUP PROBABLY DIDN'T SEEM WORTH THE EFFORT!



I STILL DON'T... LOOK!

THE BATS!







WHAT'RE WE RUSHING FOR? WE OUGHT TO RUN BACK IN-TO THE JUNGLE AND GET THE PACKS SO WE CAN DO THIS RIGHT...

LET'S GRAB WHAT WE CAN AND GET OUT OF HERE! THIS PLACE IS BEGINNING TO GIVE ME THE CREEPS!



NOTHIN' TO BE SCARED OF, KAISER! THERE'S JUST YOU AND I THAT STATUE OVER THERE AND... AND...



...AZEPHE-TE!

IT... IT CAN'T BE! NOT AFTER 450 YEARS!



VIOLETORS OF THE TEMPLE! PREPARE TO FEEL THE WRATH OF ARDISIS!



RUN FOR IT, KAISER! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE... RUN!



THE BATS! GOOD LORD, THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!

RISING! HELP ME!



DIRTY LITTLE BEGGARS! YOU HURT BADLY? WE'VE GOT TO MAKE IT TO THE JUNGLE! COM'N, HURRY!



WE CAN STOP NOW. THE FOLIAGE IS TOO DENSE FOR THE BATS TO GET AT US!

CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT MADE 'EM ATTACK US! THEY DIDN'T BOTHER US WHEN WE WENT IN THE TEMPLE!



IT'S ONLY NATURAL. AFTER ALL, THEY'RE VAMPIRES!

YEAH, KAISER? WELL, THE BATS MAY BE NATURAL BUT HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN SOMETHING LIKE AZEPHE-TE, WISE GUY?



SIMPLE. HE'S A VAMPIRE, TOO.

A WHAT? LOOK, WE KNOW VAMPIRE BATS EXIST IN THIS AREA, EVERYBODY DOES! BUT VAMPIRES IN HUMAN FORM ARE STRICTLY FOR HORROR FANS!

STABBING HIMSELF WAS ONLY *PART* OF THE SACRIFICIAL RITUAL AZEPHE-TE WENT THROUGH... IT BROUGHT FORTH THE BLOOD SO THE TEMPLE BATS WOULD SWOOP DOWN ON HIM, AND THEIR BITE TURNED *HIM* INTO A VAMPIRE!

YOU NEVER MENTIONED THAT PART OF THE LEGEND BEFORE... YOU *COULDN'T!* NO SURVIVOR WITNESSED *THAT* PART... YOU'RE TALKING CRAZY!

THE POWER OF ARDISIS DICTATES THAT HIS VAMPIRIC GUARDIANS MUST STAY WITHIN THE TEMPLE AREA TO GUARD THE TREASURES FOREVER...

W-WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU, KAISER? HOW... HOW'D YOU EVER DREAM UP SUCH A STORY?

BECAUSE THOSE BATS BIT *ME*, RISING... INFECTED *ME!* I MUST RETURN TO THE TEMPLE TO HELP GUARD ARDISIS AND HIS WEALTH FOR ETERNITY...

...AS YOU TOO WILL DO!!

YAAAARGHHH!

HEE, HEE! THE BOYS WON'T REALLY NEED THE TREASURE ANYWAY SINCE THEY'VE FOUND STEADY JOBS! IF YOU'RE INTERESTED, THEY TELL ME ARDISIS IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW APPLICANTS. SUCH AN AGGRESSIVE OUTFIT CAN ALWAYS USE SOME FRESH BLOOD!



HEE, HEE! THIS STORY ISN'T NECESSARILY THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMEL'S BACK, BUT IF IT IS IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE RESULT OF **OLD AGE!** THE CAMEL'S AGE THAT IS, NOT THE STORY'S. FOR THE TALE IS AS TIMELESS AS TOMORROW, TAKING PLACE IN A LAND OF YESTERDAY, AND A FITTING TITLE COULD ONLY BE...

...NOR CUSTOM, STALE...

I WAS TRAVELLING IN THE LAND OF SUMARIA SEVERAL YEARS AGO ACCOMPANIED BY MY BRIDE ELAINE. IT WAS OUR HONEYMOON IN FACT AND IN THE BLISTERING DESERT HEAT WE WONDERED HOW THE TRAVEL POSTERS COULD EVER HAVE MADE SUCH A DESOLATE PLACE SEEM SO INTRIGUING, SO BEGUILING, SO COMPLETELY FASCINATING...



WE HAD ARRIVED IN THIS LAND BUT THREE DAYS PAST, AT THE SEAPORT OF MULLACCA A CITY (IF ONE COULD CALL IT A CITY) THAT HAD ITS MARKETS AND BAZAARS BUT LITTLE ELSE AND LOOKING FORWARD TO OUR JOURNEY TO THE MOUNTAIN OF JURADA, WE WERE GLAD TO PUT IT BEHIND US...

A SMALL TEMPLE, LYING HALFWAY UP THE MOUNTAIN ITSELF WAS THE MAIN REASON FOR OUR JOURNEY. FOR IT WAS HERE WE SOUGHT TO FIND THE ANSWERS TO MANY QUESTIONS—QUESTIONS CONCERNING MY BRIDE.



SHE WAS NOT ENGLISH AS I WAS, BUT OF SOME MIDDLE EASTERN ANCESTRY. WE DIDN'T REALLY KNOW, ACTUALLY, FOR SHE HAD BEEN THE VICTIM OF AMNESIA JUST BEFORE I WAS CALLED IN TO TREAT HER. SHE HAD NO RELATIVES OR FRIENDS, WE KNEW NOT FROM WHERE SHE CAME OR WHEN, OR...OR ANYTHING, BUT I FELL IN LOVE WITH HER ALMOST AT ONCE, NONETHELESS.



WE HAD TRIED EVERY MEANS OF RECALLING HER MEMORY, OF IDENTIFYING HER, BUT WITH NO SUCCESS. IT WAS ONLY WHEN WE DECIDED TO MARRY AND BEGAN TO PLAN OUR HONEYMOON THAT WE ACCIDENTALLY RECEIVED A GLIMMER OF HOPE...



WE HAD SPENT MANY HOURS BROWSING THROUGH TRAVEL FOLDERS OF SUCH PLACES AS NEW YORK, OF PARIS AND HAWAII, BUT SOMEHOW THEY ALL SEEMED COMMONPLACE. WE HAD HOPED TO FIND A SPOT THAT WAS DIFFERENT... EXOTIC...

IT WAS WITH THIS THOUGHT THAT WE ENTERED THE TRAVEL AGENCY OF ONE MR. ARAI KUSHNI, A SMALL, SWARTHY, OILY-SKINNED MAN WITH LARGE TEETH SET IN A FULL-LIPPED MOUTH THAT SMILED WITHOUT SMILING...

MY WIFE ELAINE IS VERY BEAUTIFUL IN THAT DARK, MYSTERIOUS MANNER SO DOMINANT IN FOREIGN WOMEN, AND I COULD UNDERSTAND MR. KUSHNI'S SOMEWHAT KEEN APPRAISAL OF HER... BUT THOUGH IT RILED MY JEALOUSY, ELAINE SEEMED NOT TO NOTICE, AND SO I HELD MY TONGUE AND SAID NOTHING...



THE WALLS OF HIS ESTABLISHMENT WERE COVERED WITH BRIGHT TRAVEL POSTERS AND MR. KUSHNI GRACIOUSLY RELATED INTERESTING FACTS REGARDING THE PLACES THEY REPRESENTED...HONG KONG, INDIA, BURMA...

AND THEN WE FACED A POSTER OF SUMARIA, AND I COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE A TREMOR PULSE THROUGH MY LOVELY ELAINE. MR. KUSHNI WAS SPEAKING NOT TO ME, BUT TO HER, AND AS I TURNED TO HER, I COULD SEE THAT SOMETHING WAS OBVIOUSLY WRONG.

ELAINE! ELAINE, DARLING! WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?

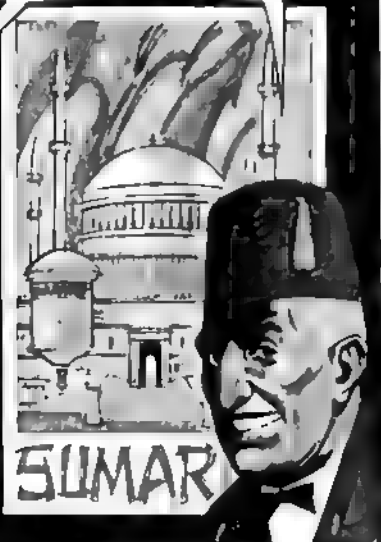
I...I DON'T KNOW. THAT POSTER...IT HAD AN EFFECT ON ME...



SHE WAS VISIBLY SHAKEN. I TURNED AGAIN TO THE POSTER, DEEMED IT TO BE MUCH LIKE ANY OTHER...

MR. KUSHNI, WHAT IS THAT PICTURE THE POSTER DEPICTS?

IT IS A TEMPLE, SIR. A HOLY TEMPLE, KNOWN AS "AL VISLU SADA"... **THE TEMPLE OF LIFE!**



AGAIN ELAINE REACTED. SHE CLUTCHED MY ARM, GAZED PLEADINGLY, FRIGHTENINGLY INTO MY EYES.

ELAINE: THAT POSTER HAS SOME MEANING TO YOU! WHAT IS IT?

I DON'T KNOW, MY DARLING! I ONLY KNOW IT... IT'S TRYING TO MAKE ME REMEMBER SOMETHING... BUT I CANNOT!



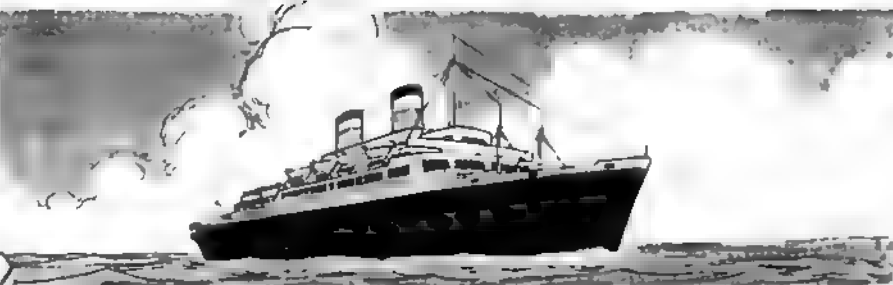
CLEARLY THERE WAS NO CHOICE, FOR HERE WAS A POSSIBILITY OF LIFTING THE VEIL FROM ELAINE'S MIND, AND SHE AND I BOTH KNEW WE COULD NOT LIVE OUT OUR LIVES TOGETHER WITHOUT SEEING THIS CLUE TO ITS END...

MR. KUSHNI, I WANT YOU TO ARRANGE PASSAGE FOR TWO, TO SUMARIA!

IT SHALL BE DONE, SIR!



OUR BOAT LEFT LONDON THE FOLLOWING WEEK. THE WEDDING WAS BRIEF AND THE JOURNEY WAS LONG AND THOUGH WE TRIED TO BE GAY, THERE HOVERED OVER US THE INTERMINABLE QUESTIONS WAITING TO BE ANSWERED.



NOW WE JOGGED ON CAMEL'S BACK ACROSS DESERTED, SEARING WASTELAND, APPROACHING WITH PAINSTAKING SLOWNESS, THE MOUNTAINS THAT LOOMED BEFORE US. WE SPENT ANOTHER ARDUOUS DAY IN THE SADDLE, AND THEN WE WERE IN THE FOOTHILLS...

IT CAN'T BE MUCH FURTHER, CAN IT, PETER?

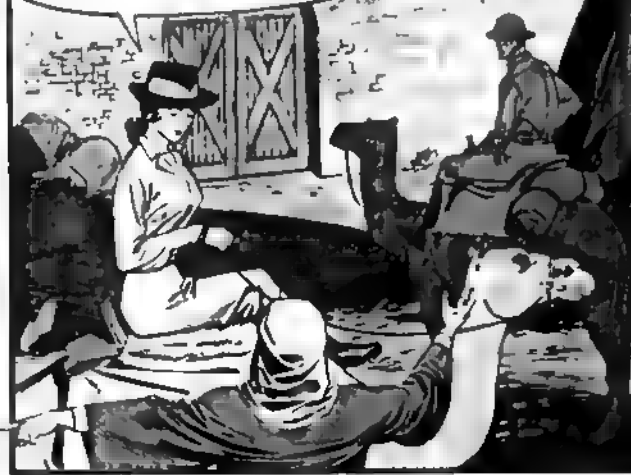
NO, I DON'T THINK SO. WE SHOULD REACH THE VILLAGE OF RANUMA BEFORE DARK.



AND SO WE DID. A SHORT TIME AFTER SUNSET WE CLIMBED THE LAST RIDGE AND BEFORE US IN THE GATHERING DUSK WE SAW OUR DESTINATION.. RANUMA!

PETER! THE GUIDES WANT US TO GET OFF THE CAMELS! I DON'T THINK THEY WANT TO GO ANY FURTHER THAN THIS!

OH, BLAST!



ANGRILY, I PAID THEM THEIR WAGES AND THEY LEFT, THEN TURNING OUR ATTENTION TO THE VILLAGE, WE SAW THAT THE MASSIVE GATES HAD OPENED AND A CLUSTER OF PEOPLE CAME SLOWLY TOWARD US...



WE WERE LED THROUGH THE GATES INTO THE SMALL, DARKENING VILLAGE. NIGHT WAS FALLING RAPIDLY AND THE SHAPES OF BUILDINGS SEEMED BUT BLACKISH SHADOWS...



IN SILENCE, THE BEARERS BROUGHT OUR BELONGINGS TO A SQUALID ROOM IN ONE OF THE BUILDINGS WHICH I SUPPOSED WAS THE LOCAL INN. WE ENTERED AND THE DOOR CLOSED BEHIND US, LEAVING US ALONE ...

THOUGH WE HAD EATEN LITTLE THAT DAY, NEITHER OF US CARED FOR FOOD, AND SINCE WE BOTH WERE VERY TIRED, WE CHANGED TO SLEEPWEAR, STRETCHED OUT ON THE TWO SMALL BEDS AND PROMPTLY SLEPT...

AT WHAT HOUR OF NIGHT IT OCCURRED, I DO NOT KNOW, BUT SLOWLY MY CONSCIOUSNESS BECAME AWARE OF THE DEEP AND HOLLOW RINGING OF A BELL, SLOW IN CADENCE, LONG AND FRIGHTENING IN TONE, SOUNDING AT ONCE BOTH NEAR AND FAR AWAY...



I ROSE QUIETLY AND CAUTIOUSLY MADE MY WAY THROUGH THE ALMOST TOTAL BLACKNESS OF THE ROOM TO WHERE THE NIGHT DIMLY OUTLINED THE SMALL WINDOW...



I LOOKED OUT ONTO THE VILLAGE BUILDINGS, ALL SHADOWED AND HUSHED. I SAW NO ONE AT ALL, BUT AS I GAZED ABOUT, MY EYES BEFELL IN THE STARLIGHT A PATHWAY LEADING FROM THE BOUNDARY OF THE TINY HAMLET UP INTO THE MOUNTAIN, AND THERE WAS SOMEONE...SOMEONE CLIMBING THAT PATHWAY!



IN A FRENZY, I DRESSED AND RUSHED FROM THE BUILDING, STUMBLING IN THE BLACKNESS ACROSS THE VILLAGE GROUNDS TO THE PATHWAY...



SHE'S NOT IN SIGHT! I'LL HAVE TO HURRY! SHE'S HEADING FOR THE TEMPLE UP THERE... THE TEMPLE OF LIFE!

MADLY I HURRIED UPWARD, MY THOUGHTS IN JUMBLED CONFUSION. AS I NEARED THE CREST OF THE PATHWAY, MY HEAVING LUNGS WERE ASSAILED WITH A STRANGE YET FAMILIAR ODOR, SICKENING AND CHARNAL...AND AS I TOOK THE LAST FEW STEPS, THE TEMPLE STOOD BEFORE ME.



MORRIFIED, I COULD ONLY WATCH HER AS SHE CALMLY WALKED UP THE TEMPLE STEPS INTO THE WAITING HANDS OF TALL, SHROUDED FIGURES WHO USHERED HER INSIDE...



THEY...THEY WERE **EXPECTING HER!** WHAT HAVE THEY DONE TO MAKE HER DO THIS?!

I RAN HEADLONG ACROSS THE OPEN GROUND TO THE TEMPLE STEPS BEFORE SLOWING AND CAUTIOUSLY CLIMBING THEM TO THE OPEN DOORWAY. THE STENCH WAS NOW ALMOST UNBEARABLE, CAUSING ME TO CHOKE.



GREAT SCOTT! I KNOW THAT SMELL FROM THE WAR! THE SMELL OF **DEATH!**

WITH POUNDING HEART I SLIPPED INSIDE THE TEMPLE WHERE MY WORST FEARS WERE REALIZED. IN THE DUSKY, FOUL-SMELLING CHAMBER THE NAUSEATING MIXTURE OF DECAY AND STRONG INCENSE ONLY HEIGHTENED THE TERRIFYING SIGHT.



GOOD HEAVENS! WHAT FIENDISH PLACE IS THIS THAT COLLECTS BODIES FOR ITS EVIL NEEDS?

IN A FAR CORNER, HOODED FIGURES BENT OVER A BODY, AND AT A SIGNAL, TWO SLOW-MOVING, ZOMBIE-LIKE CREATURES CAME FORWARD AND REMOVED THE CARCASS.



WHAT ARE THEY? HOW CAN I BELIEVE THIS, THOUGH I KNOW IT TO BE HAPPENING?

MY FEARS FOR ELAINE'S SAFETY WERE AT FEVER PITCH! THE INCESSANT BELL-SOUND THROBBED AND RESOUNDED THROUGH THE VERY WALLS, AND I STEALTHILY CREEPT INTO THE NEXT CHAMBER WHERE SEVERAL FIGURES IN SHROUDS DIRECTED THE BURNING OF A FIRE IN A HUGE CALDRON...



THEY...THEY'RE CREMATING THE BODIES!

ONE AFTER ANOTHER, THE LIVING-DEAD BEINGS CLIMBED TO THE CAULDRON'S RIM AND DUMPED THEIR STIFFENED BURDENS INTO THE FLAMES. THE CHOKING, SEARING HEAT AND VOMITOUS SMELL ALMOST CAUSED ME TO FAINT...

FIENDS! **FIENDS!** TO DESECRATE THE DEAD! THIS IS NO TEMPLE OF LIFE, BUT OF **DEATH!**



WILD ALMOST BEYOND REASON I PLUNGED INTO THE NEXT CHAMBER. IN SEARCH OF MY BRIDE AND THERE ON A RAISED ALTAR SHE LAY AS IF DEAD, HER PALE WHITE SKIN CONTRASTING SHARPLY WITH THE BLACK-ROBED FIGURES ATTENDING HER. IN THEIR HANDS WERE INSTRUMENTS, AND SURROUNDING THEM WERE JARS AND URNS, VESSELS FILLED WITH THE POWDERS AND LIQUIDS OF ANCIENT, UNHOLY ALCHEMY...

STOP, YOU FOUL DEVILS! TAKE YOUR HANDS FROM HER!



TERRIFIED AND INSANE WITH FURY, I CHARGED THE SEPULCHRAL BEINGS, PUMMELLING AND THRASHING MY WAY THROUGH THEM TO THE ALTAR!

GET AWAY FROM HER! GET AWAY!



ATOP THE ALTAR I BEGAN RIPPING AWAY THE NEEDLES AND TUBES THAT PIERCED HER FLESH AND AS I DID SO AN AWESOME MOAN ERUPTED FROM BEHIND. I TURNED IN TIME TO STOP A PHANTOMED SHROUD FROM ATTACKING ME, BY KICKING OVER A BRAZIER OF FLAMING COALS...



THE FIGURE SPRAWLED TO THE FLOOR UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THE HEAVY BRAZIER, ITS COALS ENGULFING HIS ROBES AND SETTING HIM AFIRE. QUICKLY AS THE DEMON'S ALLIES RUSHED TO HIS AID, I SNATCHED THE LIMP FORM OF MY BELOVED INTO MY ARMS, AND RAN!



THROUGH THE OUTER CHAMBERS I DASHED, MY SUDDEN ACTION SEEMING TO TAKE ALL BY SURPRISE, FOR NO ONE STOPPED ME! HAD THEY TRIED I WOULD HAVE RENT THEM APART WITH MY HANDS!



I RAN...AND RAN! AWAY FROM THAT FIENDISH, HORRID-SMELLING DEVIL'S LAIR! DOWN THE PATHWAY I STUMBLED, MY BREATHS COMING IN RAVAGED GASPS, TRYING TO CLEANSSE THEMSELVES OF THE FOULNESS!

ON I WENT, TO THE BASE OF THE PATH, THROUGH THE SILENT, EMPTY VILLAGE, THROUGH THE GATE AND INTO THE DAWNING LIGHT OF THE DESERT ON CHURNING LEGS IN SHIFTING SAND I RACED TO RID MYSELF OF THE HORROR THAT HAUNTED MY BRAIN AND FOLLOWED BEHIND ON OMINOUS BELL TONES CARRYING ACROSS THE DESERT TO SPEED ME AWAY!



AWAY! AWAY! IN SHIMMERING, BLAZING DESERT HEAT WITH CRYING AND TEARS OF ANGUISH AND PAIN AND REVOLTING, TERRIFIED MADNESS AND FEAR AND MILES AND MILES UNTIL CHOKING AND WOBBLING ON LEGS OF STRAW I COULD MOVE NO MORE AND COLLAPSED HEADLONG INTO THE BLISTERING SAND!



LONG, LONG HOURS PASSED BEFORE THE COOL, FRESH BREEZE OF THE DESERT NIGHT CARESSSED AND SOOTHED THE FIERY HEAT OF MY BRAIN, AND WITH JERKING, NODDING MOTIONS I RAISED MY HEAD AND OPENED BURNING EYES TO SEE A FAMILIAR FACE...

...EH?...KUSH...KUSHNI! YOU...*YOU* PLANNED THIS. YOU SENT HER TO THEM. IF...IF I HAD THE STRENGTH... TO KILL YOU...

EVERYONE MUST DIE, MY FRIEND...



...KILL YOU...

...AND THOSE OF US WHO CANNOT BE SAVED ARE DESTROYED IN THE FIRES OF OBLIVION. THEY WHO ARE PARTIALLY SAVED REMAIN TO WORK AND ASSIST. BUT OTHERS ARE FULLY RESTORED AND ALLOWED TO RE-ENTER THE WORLD OF THE LIVING...



HIS SOFT VOICE, HIS MANNER AND WORDS ALL TENDED TO MUDDLE MY THOUGHTS. I COULD NOT COMPREHEND... I COULD ONLY CONCENTRATE ON GATHERING PHYSICAL ENERGY...

DO YOU UNDERSTAND NOW? ONCE EACH YEAR THEY MUST RETURN FOR FURTHER RESTORATION. I KNOW... FOR I AM ONE WHO HAS BEEN RESTORED. SEE? THIS CRESCENT ON MY FOREHEAD... IT IDENTIFIES ME AS IT DID YOUR WIFE.

YOU WILL FORGIVE ME, MY FRIEND, BUT I CAN TARRY NO LONGER FOR MY HOUR IN THE TEMPLE IS FAST APPROACHING. NOW, I CAN ONLY... I CAN ONLY LEAVE YOU ALONE WITH YOUR GRIEF.

...WAIT...YOU...YOU SAID THEY **RESTORE** LIFE. THEN TAKE HER THERE... TAKE HER THERE... TO THE TEMPLE...

IN THIS LAND, EVERYONE WHO DIES IS BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE. THE HIGH PRIESTS THERE ARE NOT SORCERERS OR DEVILS...THEY DO NOT DESECRATE AND KILL! THEY **RESTORE** LIFE! AND THEY HAVE TRIED TO RESTORE **HER** LIFE...FOR YOU!

OH...NO...

NO, MY FRIEND...RESTORATION IN FULL CAN ONLY BE DONE ONCE, AND IT TAKES BUT A GLANCE TO SEE SHE HAS DIED MANY YEARS BEFORE THIS DAY. BY TAKING HER FROM THE TEMPLE YOU HAVE NOT **SAVED** HER... YOU HAVE **CAUSED** HER TO BE IN DEATH FOREVER!

AND NOW, IN SOLITUDE, SURROUNDED BY JARS AND URNS FILLED WITH THE POWDERS AND FROTHING, BUBBLING LIQUIDS. I PORE THROUGH ANCIENT TOMES, READING, SEARCHING, EXPERIMENTING...HOPING TO FIND THE MAGICAL FORMULA THAT WILL REANIMATE MY BEAUTIFUL ELAINE AND ONCE MORE RETURN HER TO THE LIVING...

PATIENCE, MY DARLING...PATIENCE! THERE **MUST** BE A WAY...AND I WILL FIND IT! I WILL FIND IT! JUST... JUST HAVE PATIENCE...

SAHARA Y'N DOIN', GANG? HEE, HEE! ELAINE WAS A DEAD-HEAD ALL THE TIME. TURNED OUT TO BE A REAL **STINKER** DIDN'T SHE? WELL, FOR **PETE'S** SAKE, WHAT COULD YOU EXPECT? HE DID MARRY HER FOR BETTER OR WORSE, DIDN'T HE?

SO WHAT COULD BE WORSE?

The End

THE ILE DU DIABLE ON THE SOUTH AMERICAN COAST, 1931... A SMALL, WORTHLESS ISLAND WITH A GRIM REPUTATION... *DEVIL'S ISLAND!* THE NOTORIOUS FRENCH PRISON COLONY FROM WHICH THERE IS NO...



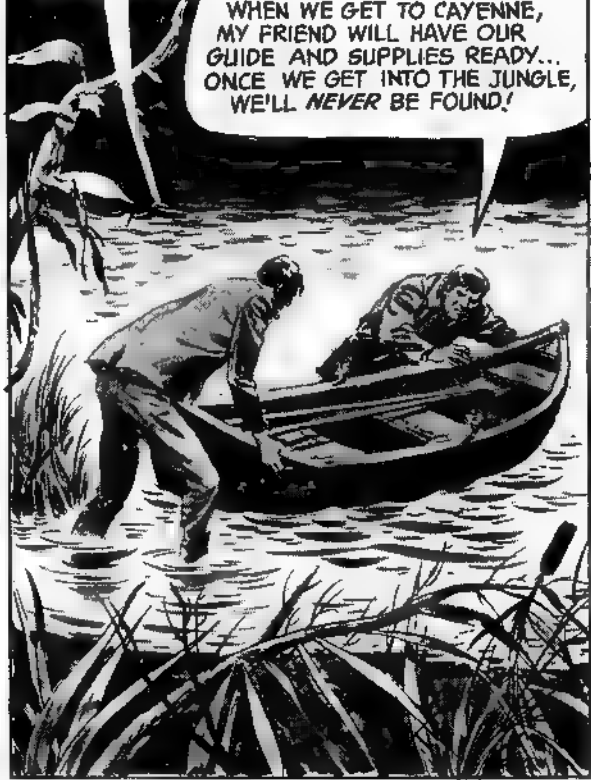
ESCAPE!

THANK GOD, MY CONTACT DID NOT FAIL US! THE BOAT IS HERE, ANTOINE, JUST AS HE PROMISED!

HURRY, MAURICE! THEY'RE NOT FAR BEHIND!

QUICKLY! WE CAN LOSE THEM IN THE DARKNESS OFF SHORE!

WHEN WE GET TO CAYENNE, MY FRIEND WILL HAVE OUR GUIDE AND SUPPLIES READY... ONCE WE GET INTO THE JUNGLE, WE'LL NEVER BE FOUND!



MANY DAYS AND FOUR HUNDRED MILES INTO THE MAINLAND INTERIOR, THE TWO ESCAPED CONVICTS NEARED THE AMAZON RIVER, SPREADING ITS POWER OF LIFE AND DEATH THROUGHOUT THE JUNGLE COUNTRY...

LORD, THIS HEAT IS MURDEROUS! A FEW WEEKS OF THIS AND I FEEL READY TO ROT! HOW MUCH FURTHER MUST WE GO, MY FRIEND?

NOT FAR, MAURICE. JUST THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER...



YOU'RE CERTAIN THE MONEY WILL STILL BE WHERE YOU HID IT? AFTER ALL, IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS ON THAT MISERABLE ISLAND...

BUT OF COURSE! I'M PROBABLY THE ONLY HUMAN EVER TO SET FOOT WHERE I STASHED THAT BUNDLE!



C'MON, RAMON! FIX US A RAFT SO WE CAN GET ACROSS.



I DON'T KNOW, ANTONIE. THE MORE I SEE OF THIS ACCURSED JUNGLE, THE MORE I WONDER IF ANY AMOUNT OF MONEY IS WORTH IT...

LEAVE ANY TIME YOU LIKE! ONLY REASON I OFFERED TO SPLIT WITH YOU AT ALL IS BECAUSE YOU HAD THE CONTACT WHO COULD GET US OFF THE ISLAND!



SEÑOR! ARYGOBIM! ARYGOBIA!

WHAT THE BLAZES...?!

ARYGOBIA... AN ANACONDA! BIG SNAKE NATIVES BELIEVE THEY'RE GODS... SCARED TO DEATH OF THEM! C'MON, LET'S GET IT!



GOOD LORD! LOOK AT THAT THING! IT MUST BE TWENTY FEET LONG! PERHAPS WE SHOULD NOT DISTURB SUCH A CREATURE...

I'M NO NATIVE, MAURICE...THOSE THINGS AREN'T GODS TO ME!



ANTOINE PICKED UP THE NEARBY AXE DROPPED BY RAMON AND BROUGHT IT SLAMMING DOWN SAVAGELY TOWARD THE MASSIVE SERPENT...

THERE, YOU #*%!!



THE GIANT SNAKE SQUIRMED AND WRITHED, HOPELESSLY IMPALED, AS ANTOINE DREW HIS GLEAMING MACHETE, HIS FACE SUDDENLY THAT OF A TWISTED MADMAN...

NOW, MAURICE, WATCH SOME REAL FUN!

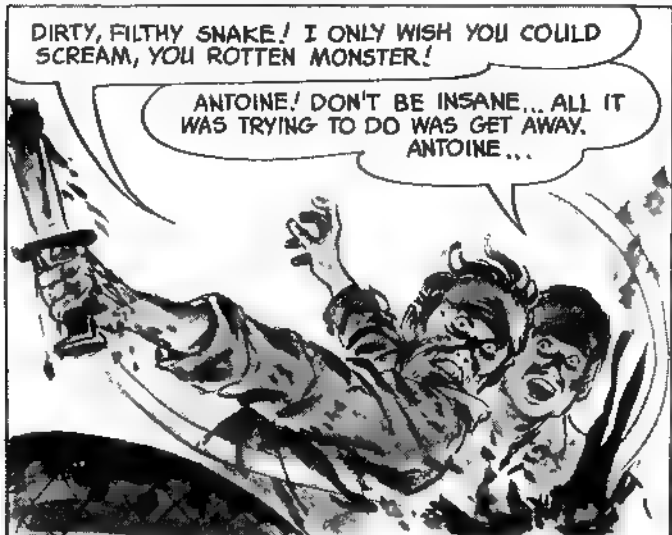


TAKING CARE TO AVOID THE THRASHING, PAIN-WRACKED BODY OF THE HUGE ANACONDA, ANTOINE BEGAN SLASHING MANIACALLY AT HIS TRAPPED PREY...

WORDS AND PLEAS FELL ON DEAF EARS AS ANTOINE TOYED WITH HIS SADISTIC PLEASURES FOR NEARLY AN HOUR BEFORE THE ANACONDA SHUDDERED, AND THEN WAS STILL...

DIRTY, FILTHY SNAKE! I ONLY WISH YOU COULD SCREAM, YOU ROTTEN MONSTER!

ANTOINE! DON'T BE INSANE... ALL IT WAS TRYING TO DO WAS GET AWAY. ANTOINE...



BLAST IT! DEAD ALREADY! SOMETIMES THEY LAST ALL DAY IF YOU'RE CAREFUL AND DO IT JUST RIGHT...



HE DIDN'T NOTICE THE GLARE OF CONSUMING HATRED IN THE EYES OF RAMON...

THE NEXT MORNING, WITH THE RAFT COMPLETED, THE THREE MEN SLOWLY MADE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE MIGHTY AMAZON...

JUST HOW MUCH MONEY IS THERE, ANTOINE? YOU'VE OFTEN SAID THERE'S ENOUGH TO PUT YOU ON EASY STREET FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE, BUT...

THAT'S RIGHT. PLENTY FOR ME...



...BUT NOT FOR TWO! YOU THINK I'M SHARING ANY OF THAT LOOT WITH YOU? YOU WERE MY PASSPORT OF THE ISLAND, THAT'S ALL, MAURICE!

BUT... BUT WE MADE A DEAL...



WHICH I JUST TERMINATED! SEE THOSE FISH IN THE RIVER? BEAUTIFUL, AREN'T THEY? NATIVES CALL THEM BY MANY NAMES! CARIBE...PERAI... TIGERFISH... AND SOMETIMES...



...PIRANHA!!

YAAARRRRROOOHHH!

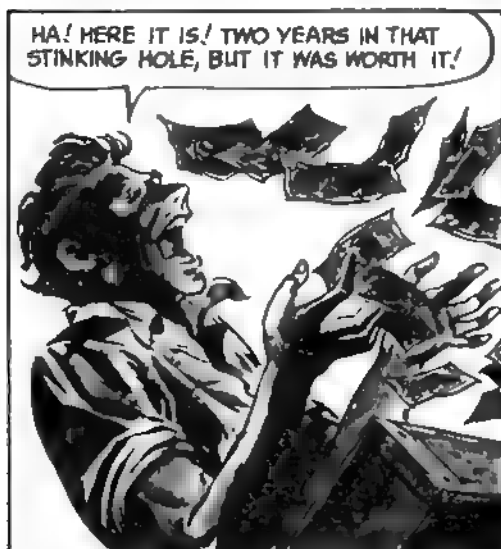


FOR A FEW BRIEF SECONDS MAURICE STRUGGLED IN THE WATER, HIS SCREAMS PIERCING THE HOT JUNGLE AIR AS HUNDREDS OF SMALL, SHARP TEETH SLASHED AT HIS BODY! THEN, SILENCE AGAIN PREVAILED AS A POOL OF RED SPREAD SLOWLY ACROSS THE WATER...

ALL RIGHT, YOU GAWKING SAVAGE! GET THIS RAFT ACROSS THE RIVER!



SHORTLY AFTER CROSSING THE RIVER, ANTOINE AND RAMON REACHED THE BASE OF A LARGE TREE. THE FRENCHMAN FELL TO HIS KNEES, ALMOST ATTACKING THE EARTH IN HIS GREEDY FERVOR...



ANTOINE FELL TO THE GROUND, PARALYZED BY THE DEADLY STING OF THE SCORPION. UNABLE TO MOVE, HE FOUND HE COULD ONLY SPEAK...



RAMON... HELP ME! DO SOMETHING! I CAN'T MOVE!

THERE IS NO CURE FOR THE BITE OF THE SCORPION, SENOR. IN A FEW MOMENTS IT WILL ALL BE OVER!



NO, NO! THERE MUST BE SOME WAY... YOU! YOUR PEOPLE PRACTICE THAT VODOO STUFF, SURELY YOU CAN SAVE ME SOMEHOW. I DON'T WANT TO DIE.

THERE... THERE IS *ONE* WAY, SENOR, IF YOU WANT TO LIVE SO BADLY. BUT I DON'T THINK YOU...

DON'T TRY TO GUESS WHAT I THINK! JUST *DO* IT! YOU CAN HAVE HALF... NO, *ALL* THE MONEY! JUST DO SOMETHING QUICKLY!



IN A FEW MOMENTS, RAMON HAD BUILT A SMALL FIRE, AND BEGAN A STRANGE DANCE AROUND IT. HE WAS CHANTING SOMETHING, BUT ANTOINE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THE WORDS...

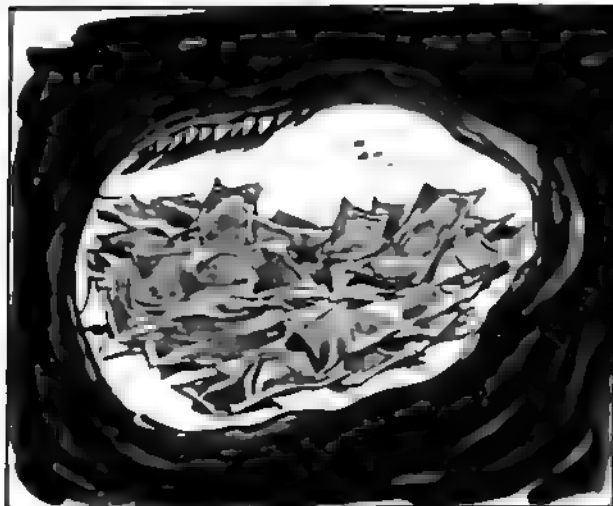


MAN IS OF TWO PARTS, SENOR. ONE PART OF YOU IS DYING... I CANNOT SAVE THAT, BUT I *CAN* SAVE THE OTHER PART... IF THAT IS YOUR WISH.



BUT ANTOINE COULD NO LONGER SPEAK. AS THE BLACKNESS DESCENDED, HE KNEW HE WAS DYING...

THERE WAS A BURST OF SUNLIGHT. ANTOINE HAD NO FEELING OF AWAKENING, OF OPENING HIS EYES. HE WAS SUDDENLY AWAKE, LYING ON THE GROUND, STARING AT HIS FORTUNE...



HE LOOKED SLIGHTLY TO THE RIGHT AND SAW HIS GUN, WITHIN EASY REACH. HE KNEW THEN THAT ALL HE HAD TO DO WAS GRAB THE PISTOL, KILL THAT STUPID RAMON, WHO FOR SOME REASON HAD HELPED HIM, AND TAKE OFF, MONEY AND ALL!

HIS BRAIN TOLD HIS ARM TO REACH OUT AND GRAB THE GUN, BUT THERE WAS NO RESPONSE. WAS HE STILL PARALYZED? NO... HE COULD MOVE HIS HEAD EASILY ENOUGH. PERHAPS HIS ARMS WERE PINNED DOWN... HE TWISTED HIS HEAD AROUND...



HE FELT SEARING, UNBELIEVABLE PAIN AS THE KNIFE WAS BURIED IN HIS BACK, STAKING HIM HELPLESSLY TO THE GROUND. THEN HE SAW RAMON... STANDING... STARING...



NOW THERE'S A SPLIT PERSONALITY THAT REALLY GOT SPLIT! BUT DON'T YOU SPLIT UNTIL YOU CATCH MY NEXT BIT OF SLITHERING SLIME...

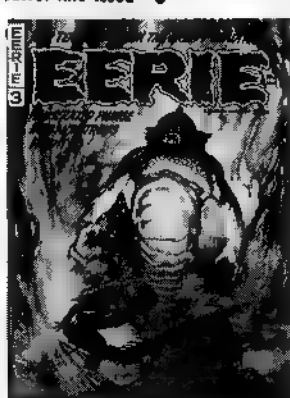


ANTOINE WISHED VERY MUCH THAT HE COULD SCREAM... BUT THE ONLY SOUND THAT PIERCED THE SILENCE WAS A *HISS!*

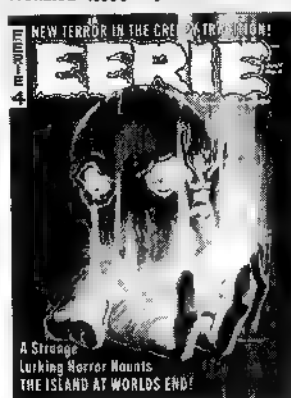
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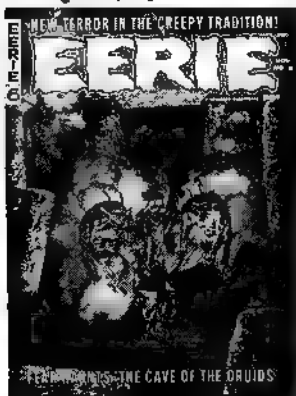
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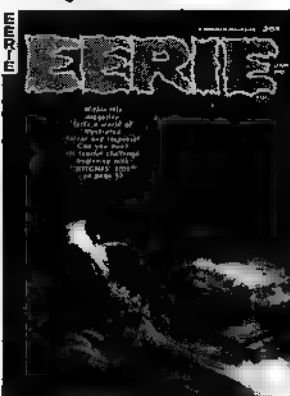
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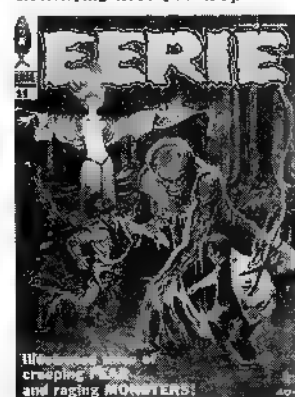
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SHHHH! COME ON IN, WRITHING READERS, BUT BE VERY QUIET... THE GENTLEMAN DOWN BELOW IS HARD AT WORK, AND WE DON'T WANT TO DISTURB HIM. HE'S COMMERCIAL ARTIST JERRY HACKER, AND IF YOU THINK HE'S BUSY NOW, WAIT TILL HE BEGINS WORK ON THE...

PORTRAIT of SATAN!

YEAH, SOL... WHAT? WELL I'M PRETTY BUSY AS IT IS. WELL-L-L-L, IT'LL MEAN BURNING THE MIDNIGHT OIL, BUT I GUESS SO!



©*!#!!
ANOTHER
OVERNIGHT
DEADLINE!
WHY CAN'T
I SAY NO?!

OH WELL, WHEN IT'S
DONE, I'LL TAKE A
COUPLE OF DAYS OFF
... BEEN COOPED UP
IN THIS STUDIO TOO
LONG...



AND LATER...

HI, DOLL!

JERRY, YOU'RE NOT EVEN DRESSED YET! WE'LL BE LATE FOR THE THEATER!

WHAT! @#%!! I FORGOT! THIS JOB HAS GOT TO BE DELIVERED TOMORROW-- FIRST THING!

NOT AGAIN, JERRY! YOU PROMISED!

BUT YOU HAVE THE JENSEN THING TO DO OVER THE WEEKEND-- REMEMBER?

NONA, SWEETIE! I'M **STUCK** WITH IT! ... LOOK, WE'LL MAKE UP FOR IT THIS WEEKEND.

DAYS, NIGHTS, WEEKENDS! WITH **NEVER** ANY TIME FOR MYSELF, FOR US! WHY DO I PUT UP WITH IT, NONA?

I THINK I'D PREFER MY COMPETITION TO BE ANOTHER WOMAN... **THAT** I'D **KNOW** HOW TO HANDLE!

YOU'RE TOO COMPULSIVE ABOUT WORK, JERRY...

I KNOW, I KNOW... BUT I'M SO CLOSE TO MAKING IT **REALLY BIG!**



JERRY, I'M REALLY WORRIED!
YOU'RE KILLING YOURSELF...
AND EVERYTHING ELSE SUFFERS.
I DON'T MEAN JUST US,
BUT THE **SERIOUS** PAINTING
YOU'RE ALWAYS TALKING
ABOUT... LIKE **THIS**,
REMEMBER?

AFTER NONA
LEAVES, THE LONG
NIGHT WEARS ON...

I'D SELL MY
SOUL TO SATAN
HIMSELF TO DO
SOMETHING
REALLY
SERIOUS!

YOU **KNOW** I WANT TO,
BUT IT'D TAKE **MONTHS**
TO GET READY FOR A
SHOW... THERE JUST
ISN'T TIME **NOW!**

...INSTEAD OF
THIS COMMERCIAL
CRUD!

OWWR!
MY ULCER! NEED
A BICARB OR I'LL
NEVER GET THROUGH
THIS NIGHT'S WORK!

PERHAPS I
COULD OFFER YOU
SOMETHING ELSE...

WHO THE DEVIL
ARE YOU? AND
HOW DID YOU
GET IN?

YOUR QUESTIONS ALMOST
ANSWER THEMSELVES,
MY DYSPEPTIC FRIEND!
MY CARD ...

"LUCIFER"? WHAT
KIND OF CHEAP
GAG IS THIS?

"CHEAP"? HARDLY!
MOST WOULD RE-
GARD MY SERVICES
GENEROUS AT THE
PRICE... **THE SOUL!**

Lucifer

LOOK!
WHOEVER YOU
ARE! IT'S LATE!
AND I DON'T FIND
ANY OF THIS
AMUSING! NOW
BEAT IT!

COME, COME,
MR. HACKER. MY TIME IS
AS VALUABLE AS YOURS
LET'S GET DOWN TO
BUSINESS, SHALL WE?

THAT DOES IT!
YOU'RE GOING OUT
-- **WHAT TH--!!**

YIIIIII!!!

NOW MR.
HACKER, ENOUGH
OF THESE HISTRI-
ONICS. AFTER ALL
**YOU SUMMONED
ME!**

I...SUM-
MONED... YOU?

OF COURSE! YOUR WORDS WERE
"I'D SELL MY SOUL TO DO SOME
REALLY SERIOUS WORK, ETC, ETC."

THEN YOU REALLY
ARE... THE... THE...

THE DEVIL!
SATAN!
MEPHISTOPHELES!
DAN SCRATCH!
THE PRINCE OF
DARKNESS---
AT YOUR
SERVICE, SIR!

BUT...BUT I
DIDN'T MEAN IT!
I WOULDN'T SELL
MY SOUL!

WHAT?
YOU'D
INCONVENIENCE
ME FOR NOTHING?
DRAG ME TO
THIS WRETCHEDLY
ARCTIC CLIMATE
FOR A WHIM?

NOTHING I WANT
IS WORTH AN
ETERNITY OF
DAMNATION!

NOTHING?
THINK, MAN,
THINK! ALL THE
TIME YOU NEED
TO EXPRESS
YOURSELF ON
CANVAS THE
WAY YOU
WANT TO...
THE SUCCESS
YOU SO
RICHLY
DESERVE!

YOU SAY
I DESERVE
SUCCESS... YOU
AGREE I HAVE TALENT!
PERHAPS YOU'D BE
INTERESTED IN
ANOTHER KIND
OF DEAL!

MY PRICE
IS FIXED,
BUT I SUP-
POSE YOU HAVE
SOME SCHEME
TO CHEAT ME
OUT OF IT! MANY
HAVE TRIED
THAT...

NO! LET
ME DO
YOUR PORTRAIT!
A CHALLENGE WORTHY
OF ONLY A GREAT
PAINTER... IF YOU AREN'T
COMPLETELY SATISFIED,
THEN NO DEAL... NO
INSTANT SUCCESS!

HA HA HA HA!
VERY GOOD,
SIR! VERY GOOD
INDEED! YOU,
MR. HACKER HAVE
DISCOVERED MY
ACHILLES HEEL...

I ADMIT TO **ONE** WEAKNESS ...
VANITY! VERY PENETRATING
OF YOU, SIR! ... AND **FOOLPROOF!**
YOUR SOUL REMAINS YOUR
OWN! IF YOU DO ME JUSTICE,
YOUR FUTURE IS ASSURED!
HOW CAN YOU FAIL
CONSIDERING YOUR
SUBJECT, EH?

VERY WELL, SIR, I
AGREE! BUT I MUST
WARN YOU! I SHALL
BE **VERY DEMANDING!**

AGREED! AND
NO TRICKS OR
SHENNANIGANS
WITH MY SOUL?

MY DEAR
HACKER!
A BARGAIN
IS A BARGAIN!
WHEN DO WE
BEGIN?

IN THE DAYS
THAT FOLLOW JERRY HACKER
TOTALLY SUCCUMBS TO THE CHALLENGE CUTTING
HIMSELF OFF FROM AGENT, CLIENTS, FRIENDS.
EVEN NONA...

JUST BEAR WITH ME
A FEW MORE DAYS, SWEET-
HEART... THEN I'LL BE ABLE
TO GIVE YOU THE WHOLE
STORY. I -

MR. HACKER! IS
THIS A SITTING OR
A TELEPHONE
TALKATHON?

BUT JERRY'S
MODEL PROVES TO BE
MOST TEMPERAMENTAL...

ALL RIGHT, **ALL RIGHT!**
CALL YOU LATER, DOLL!

MORE HEAT, MR. HACKER!
OR DO YOU INTEND TO
TITLE THIS "BLUE BOY?"

IT'S MID-JULY... THE HEAT'S
ON... I'M SWELTERING! AND
YOU'RE STILL COMPLAINING
ABOUT THE COLD!

SEVERAL SLEEPLESS DAYS LATER...

NO, NO, NO, HACKER!
YOU'VE ACHIEVED A
SUPERFICIAL RESEMBLANCE!
BUT NOT *REAL ME!*

YOU KEEP SAYING
THAT! LET'S FORGET
IT! RIGHT? DEAL'S
OFF! I'VE *HAD IT!*

WHAT! QUIT NOW?
NEVER! NOT WHEN
WE'RE THIS CLOSE
TO THE END... TO
SUCCESS!

ALL IT NEEDS IS
SOMETHING WITH THE
EYES! THEY LACK A
CERTAIN... LIGHT. YOU MUST
TRY AGAIN, HACKER... AND
GIVE IT YOUR *ALL!*

MY *ALL*? I'M
DRAINED DRY.
USED UP!

TRY, HACKER.
JUST THE EYES!
TRY!

OK, OK! BUT THIS IS
THE *LAST TIME!*

FINALLY...

THERE! IT'S DONE! IT'S TAKEN
EVERYTHING I HAVE! BUT IT'S
THE BEST THING I'VE *EVER*
DONE! TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT,
LUCIFER, BUT *GET OUT!!!*

YEESSSS... YES!
I THINK YOU'VE
DONE IT! BY JUDAS,
YOU'VE DONE IT!

THEN IT'S A DEAL? YOU'RE
SATISFIED? YOU'LL TAKE IT?

I'LL TAKE IT,
JERRY HACKER,
...AND I'LL TAKE
YOU IN THE
BARGAIN!

WHAT? WHAT DO YOU
MEAN? YOU CAN'T
TAKE ME... MY SOUL...
THAT WASN'T PART
OF THE DEAL!

NOT ORIGINALLY, NO!
BUT I CAN HARDLY
REFUSE A GIFT
PROFERRED, MY
GENEROUS FRIEND!
COME ALONG NOW!

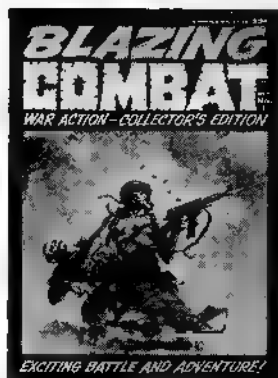
THIS ISN'T FAIR! I DON'T KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT... I
DIDN'T GIVE IT TO YOU... I GAVE YOU
THE PORTRAIT... WORKED HARD ON
IT... PUT EVERYTHING I HAD
INTO IT...

I PUT MY HEART AND
...MY HEART AND...
OH! NO! NOooo!

YES, MR. HACKER... YOUR
HEART AND SOUL INTO IT!

AND FROM THE
WAY THINGS
WORK OUT, I'D
SAY JERRY ALSO
PUT HIS FOOT
INTO IT. WELL, I
DON'T KNOW IF
HE'S REALLY ON
TOP OF THE HEAP,
BUT AT LEAST HE
HAS BECOME A
VERY HOT ARTIST!

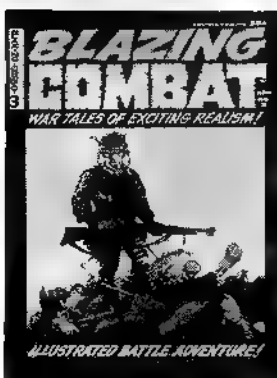
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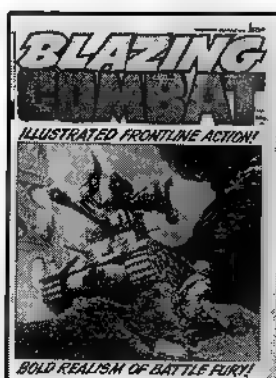
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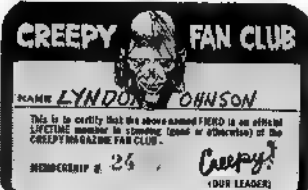
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CRAIG TANNIS
A.M.E. WILLIAMS

WHICH CAME FIRST, THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG? THIS CLASSIC BY THE GREAT ROBERT BLOCH ASKS THE SAME SORT OF QUESTION ---AND GIVES A WEIRD ANSWER! IT'S A CHILLER ABOUT THE COLD WAR...

POLICE REPORT
ENGLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY
*Statement of Roberta
'Blondie' Reiss —
We went to this
Luigi's — it's a seafood
place way south on
the highway...*

BUT, GEORGE, WE
DON'T HAVE ANY
BATHING SUITS!

SO WE WON'T GO TO
THE BEACH UNTIL IT'S
REAL DARK!



LOOK AT THAT FULL MOON. ISN'T IT BEAUTIFUL?

LET'S GO DOWN ON THE BEACH. I KNOW A LITTLE COVE WHERE WE CAN BE ALONE.

COME ON, BABY.

NOW CUT THAT OUT! I MEAN IT--I'LL SOCK YOU ONE!

I'M SORRY, HONEY. I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAME OVER ME. I KNOW YOU'RE NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL...

YOU TORE MY BLOUSE! YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY FOR IT!

WHY DON'T I GO GET ANOTHER BOTTLE? OR LET'S BOTH GO TO A TAVERN.

I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE LOOKING LIKE THIS! IF YOU WANT ANOTHER BOTTLE, YOU GO GET IT--AND BE BACK HERE IN FIVE MINUTES!

SOMETHING'S MOVING OUT THERE ... A LOG OR SOMETHING. NO, IT'S SOMEONE SWIMMING, REAL FAST.

I SAT ALONE... WAITING FOR HIM TO COME OUT OF THE WATER AND GO AWAY...

GOOD EVENING. MIGHT I INQUIRE ABOUT MY WHEREABOUTS, MISS? AND MIGHT I TROUBLE YOU FOR THE LOAN OF THAT BLANKET?

...ONLY HE DIDN'T LEAVE... AND HE DIDN'T HAVE A STITCH ON!

I LOST MY SWIM SUIT IN THE BREAKERS.

WHERE DID YOU START FROM? YOU GOT A BOAT OUT THERE?

BUT BEFORE HE ANSWERED, GEORGE CAME RUNNING DOWN FROM THE BLUFF...

HEY! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA? GIMME THAT BLANKET!

HE CAN'T! HE HASN'T ANY BATHING SUIT.

PERMIT ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF...

I MUST ADMIT THAT GEORGE STOOD UP TO THE BIG MAN...

YOU'RE COMING WITH US THEN, FELLA. HE'S PROBABLY ONE OF THOSE RUSSIAN SPIES FROM A SUBMARINE. START TALKING, WHAT'S IN THE BAG?

YOU HAVE AN
AUTOMOBILE?

OF COURSE, WHAT
DO I LOOK LIKE,
PAUL REVERE OR
SOMETHING?



THEN THE GUY LOOKED AT
GEORGE, AND IT WAS LIKE
GEORGE COULDN'T MOVE... I
FELT COLD ALL OVER...



THEN THE MAN WENT OVER
TO GEORGE AND TOOK
ALL HIS CLOTHES AND PUT
THEM ON HIMSELF!



WITHOUT A WORD, THE MAN
CLIMBED INTO GEORGE'S CAR
AND DROVE AWAY.



ONCE HE WAS OUT OF SIGHT
I SCREAMED TILL I THOUGHT
I'D HEMORRHAGE OR SOME-
THING. THAT BROUGHT GEORGE
OUT OF IT.



WE WALKED ALL THE WAY TO
THE HIGHWAY PATROL.

YOU MAY BE
RIGHT ABOUT THE
COMMUNISTS...



ONLY HE HADN'T SEEN THE
WAY THE MAN HAD LOOKED
AT GEORGE. WHEN I THINK
ABOUT IT, I COULD JUST DIE!

WESTCHESTER COUNTY
N.Y. POLICE REPORT N.Y.

Statement of Milo Fabian.

Occupation: Art Gallery
Curator.

...I had just barely
opened up when he
walked in...

YES. MR. WARLOCK IS
OUT OF TOWN. I'M MILO
FABIAN. IF YOU HAVE ANY-
THING TO SELL, SHOW IT
TO ME. I DO ALL THE
BUYING.

IS THIS THE
WARLOCK
GALLERY?

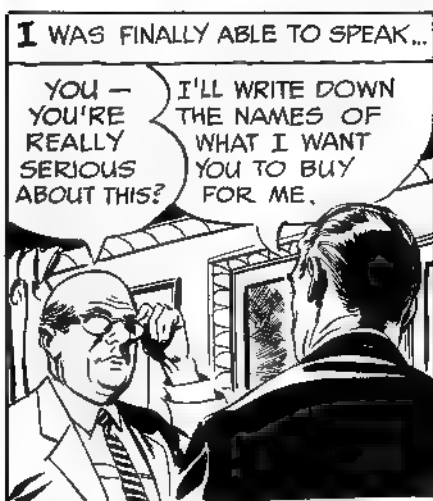


BUT THE MAN WANTED TO BUY!

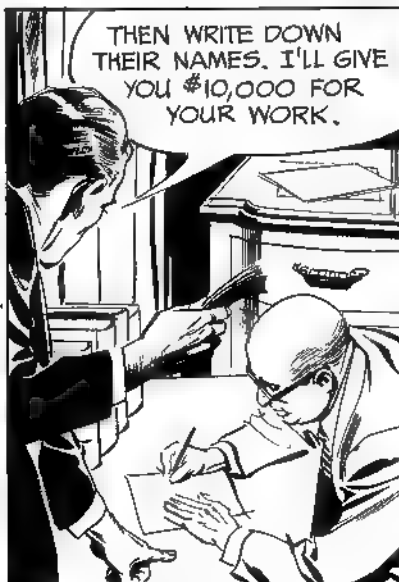
AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW,
WE SPECIALIZE IN MODERNS.

YOU DON'T
HAVE THE
PICTURES I
WANT, I'M
AFRAID.





AND HE DID: DEGAS, UTRILLO, MONET, TOULOUSE-LAUTREC...



POLICE REPORT

U.S. Coast Guard
Shore Patrol Report
Statement of Nick Krauss,
alias Herman Krueger,
alias ...
... I started on the
Caper Tuesday nite... It
was the biggest pay off
ever rigged, I got six
million bucks in four days,
and brother I earned every
cent of it!...

A black and white comic book illustration. A man in a dark suit and tie stands on the right, gesturing with his right hand while speaking. He is looking towards three other men who are seated at a table in the foreground, seen from the back. The man on the far left is balding, the middle one has glasses, and the one on the right has dark hair. They are all looking towards the standing man. The background shows a window with vertical blinds. The style is typical of mid-20th-century comic book art, with bold lines and cross-hatching for shading.

OF COURSE WE RAN INTO SOME TROUBLE. WE NEVER DID GET THE HAUL OUT OF L.A., BUT LUCKILY THE COPS SHOT UP THE GUYS SO THEY COULDN'T TRACE ANYTHING... OTHER PLACES WE GOT AWAY CLEAN...



ALL THE STUFF CAME INTO NEW JERSEY BY PRIVATE PLANE...



IT TOOK ME THREE HOURS TO GET IT ALL TO SMITH'S BOAT...



MISTER, THAT STUFF'S HOT AND I'M HOTTER. THERE'S MAYBE 10,000 JOHNS LOOKING FOR THIS LOOT... AIN'T YOU READ THE PAPERS! IT'S BIGGER THAN THE WAR CRISIS. NOW I WANT OUT OF HERE-- FAST.



BUT HE WANTED THEM CRATES AND BOXES OPEN...



IT TOOK THREE MORE HOURS, BUT I FINISHED...



HE STARTED THE ENGINES AND I STUCK MY SPECIAL IN HIS RIBS.



FOUR MILLION BUCKS ON THE BUNK IN 5- AND 10-THOUSAND DOLLAR BILLS, AND NO PHONY GEETUS EITHER...

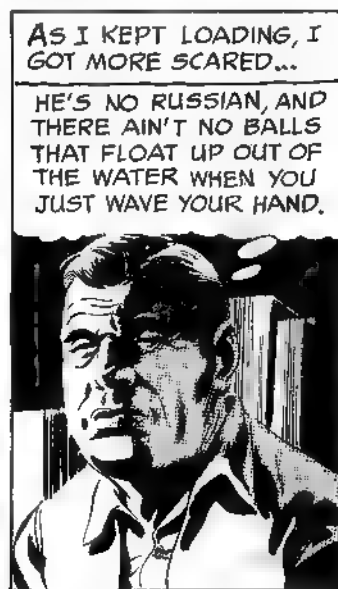
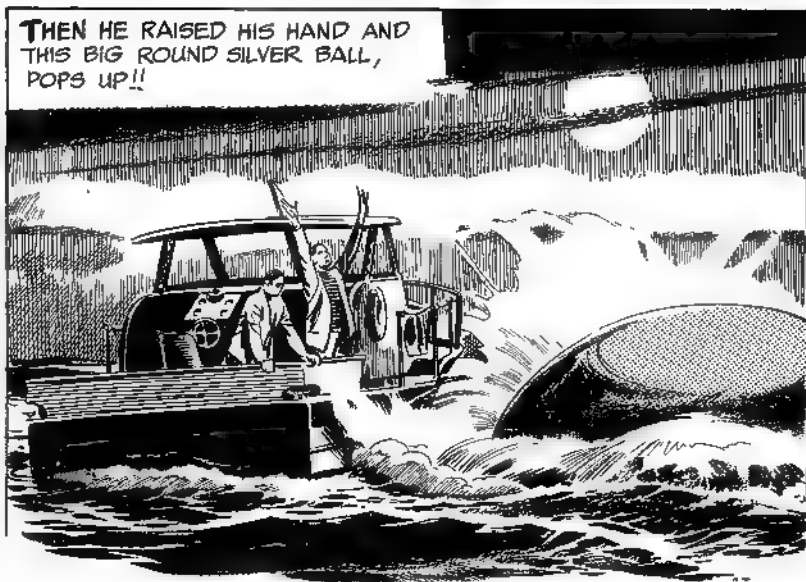


I RETURNED TO HIM, MY SUSPICIONS GONE...



SMITH CUT THE ENGINES AND DROPPED ANCHOR...





LONG ISLAND POLICE REPORT

Following statement of Elizabeth Rafferty, M.D.

I guess in this world of continuous crises we become immune to war scares, for on this night the radio commentators were more concerned with the pilfered art treasures. Nearly every valuable piece of art work was missing, and the police were watching in particular the coast where I lived. Naturally I was suspicious....

I'M DR. RAFFERTY. WON'T YOU PLEASE COME IN? I DISLIKE HAVING PATIENTS BLEED TO DEATH ON MY DOORSTEP.



A NEAT WOUND, MR. SMITH... THE BULLET WENT THROUGH CLEANLY... LOOKS LIKE A PISTOL WOUND.



YOUR ARM WILL BE STIFF FOR SEVERAL DAYS... HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

A HUNTING ACCIDENT.



YOU KNOW I HAVE TO MAKE OUT A REPORT ON ANY GUNSHOT WOUNDS.



I'M LEAVING NOW. PERHAPS THIS FEE WILL PERSUADE YOU THAT I'VE NEVER BEEN HERE.

FIFTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS?



SO MUCH MONEY... THIS VIRTUALLY CONFIRMED MY SUSPICIONS. I OPENED MY DESK DRAWER.

THIS IS ONLY A LADY'S GUN, MR. SMITH, BUT I'M AN EXPERT WITH IT. HANDS UP WHILE I PHONE THE POLICE.

I HAVE NO WEAPON, DOCTOR...



TAKE THE MONEY AND FORGET THE REPORT...

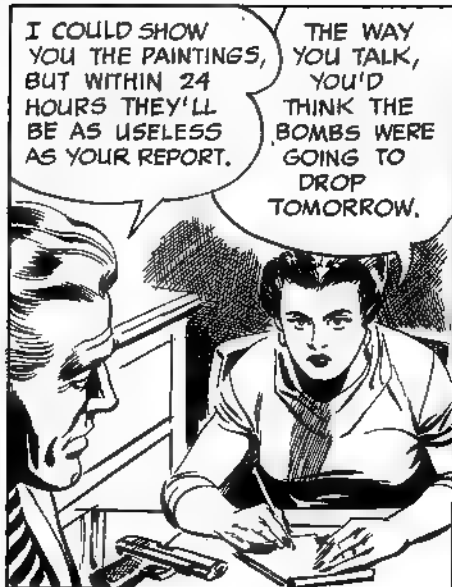
IT'S TEMPTING, BUT NO SALE... WHERE ARE THE PAINTINGS, MR. SMITH?



YOU'RE BEING FOOLISH TO DELAY, BELIEVE ME.

BELIEVE YOU, WITH THE ENTIRE COUNTRY IN AN UPROAR OVER COMMUNISTS AND STOLEN MASTERPIECES?





I COULD SHOW YOU THE PAINTINGS, BUT WITHIN 24 HOURS THEY'LL BE AS USELESS AS YOUR REPORT.

THE WAY YOU TALK, YOU'D THINK THE BOMBS WERE GOING TO DROP TOMORROW.



THEY WILL, HERE AND EVERYWHERE ELSE.



I IGNORED HIM... I'D SEEN NAPOLEONIC COMPLEXES BEFORE.

WHAT IS YOUR REAL NAME AND DATE OF BIRTH...

KIM RA... NOV. 25, 2903



STOP BEING RIDICULOUS... WHY DID YOU STEAL THE PAINTINGS?

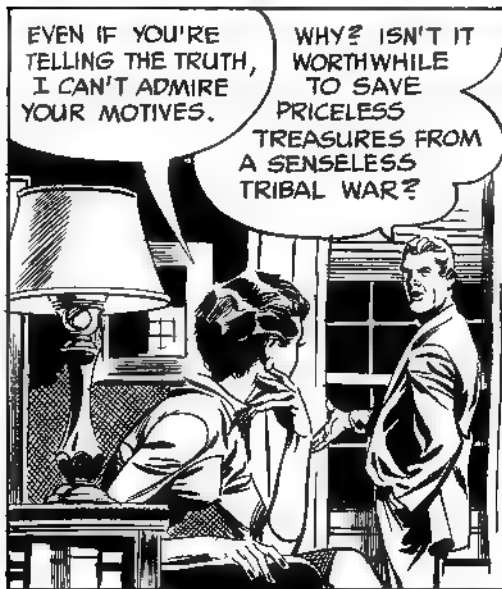
THE WAR IS COMING TOMORROW, BUT I WILL HAVE SAVED THE MASTERPIECES... YOU MUST UNDERSTAND, I KNOW BECAUSE I'M NOT OF YOUR TIME OR PLANET.



SUPPOSE I GO ALONG WITH YOUR CLAIM... HOW CAN THE PAINTINGS BE WITH YOU WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR TIME PERIOD?

SURELY THEY CAN'T PHYSICALLY EXIST IN TWO PERIODS AT THE SAME TIME.

WHY NOT... I WAS WOUNDED IN THIS TIME PERIOD, YET I DON'T BELONG HERE.



EVEN IF YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH, I CAN'T ADMIRE YOUR MOTIVES.

WHY? ISN'T IT WORTHWHILE TO SAVE PRICELESS TREASURES FROM A SENSELESS TRIBAL WAR?



BECAUSE, IF YOU KNOW SO MUCH, YOU SHOULD SAVE THE WORLD INSTEAD!



I CAN'T PREVENT ITS DESTRUCTION... NONE OF OUR RECORDS TELL HOW THE WAR WILL START... SOME TRIVIAL INCIDENT PROBABLY AND I CAN'T CHANGE HISTORY.

AREN'T YOU CHANGING IT BY TAKING THE PICTURES?



THE TIME...
I MUST GET
GOING...

YOU'RE RIGHT,
TIME'S UP...
NOW I'M GOING
TO CALL THE
POLICE...



WAIT! I'LL
EVEN TAKE
YOU WITH
ME... YOU'LL
ESCAPE!

ME? INTO
ANOTHER
TIME ZONE?
THE JOKE'S
OVER...



THEN HE SMILED AT ME. I
THOUGHT I WAS ENTIRELY
IMMUNE TO HYPNOTISM,
BUT I WAS WRONG.



I DISCOVERED I COULD
SEE, HEAR AND FEEL, BUT
WAS UNABLE TO MOVE AND
I WAS TO REMAIN IMMOBILE
FOR HOURS.



I KNEW NOW SMITH HAD
BEEN TELLING THE TRUTH,
BUT WHERE HAD HE GONE?
WHO WOULD BELIEVE MY
WILD EXPERIENCE.



SUDDENLY, A ROUND BALL
ROSE OUT OF THE OCEAN...
JUST OFF THE BOW OF A
COAST GUARD CUTTER...

IT... IT'S HIS
SHIP... IT
MUST BE



THE CUTTER BLASTED THE
SILVER BALL INTO DUST... AND
THE SHIP'S CAPTAIN REPORTED
TO HIS SUPERIOR IMMEDIATELY.



WE JUST
DESTROYED SOME
NEW TYPE OF
SOVIET WEAPON!

THEN I'M CALLING FOR AN
ALL-OUT RETALIATION!

WHAT HAD SMITH SAID? SOME TRIVIAL
INCIDENT? WELL, THIS WAS THE TRIVIAL
INCIDENT THAT STARTED THE WAR

The End

YOU ASKED FOR IT— HERE IT IS!



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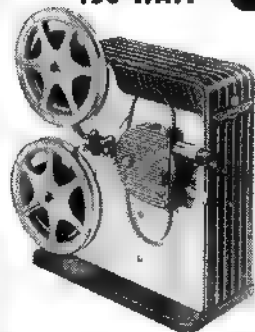
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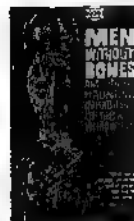
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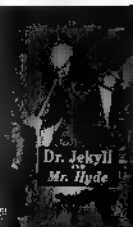


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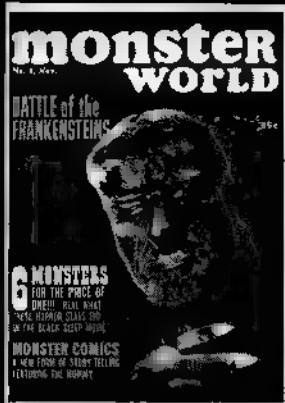
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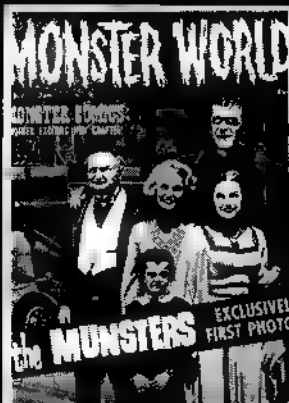
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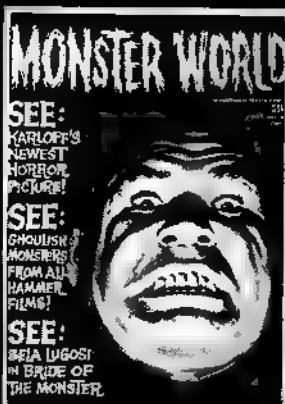
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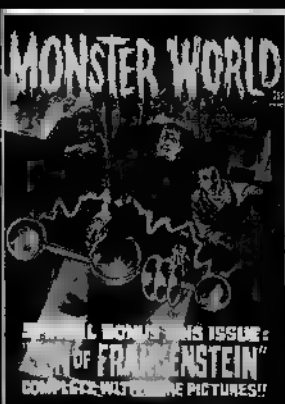
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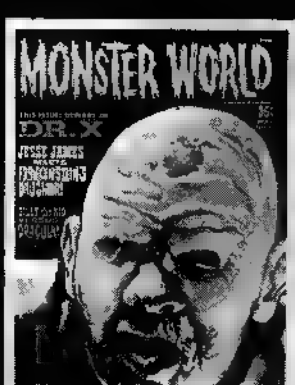
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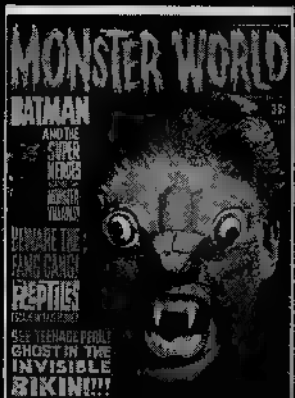
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as it was writ-
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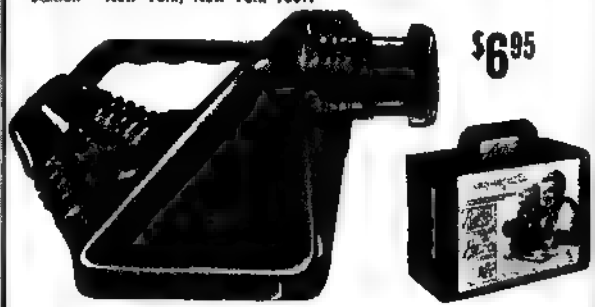
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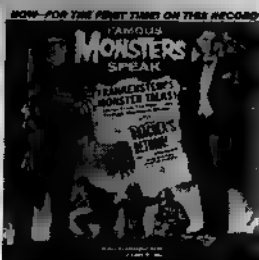
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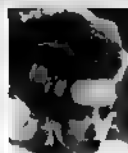
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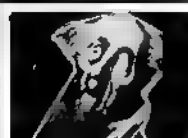
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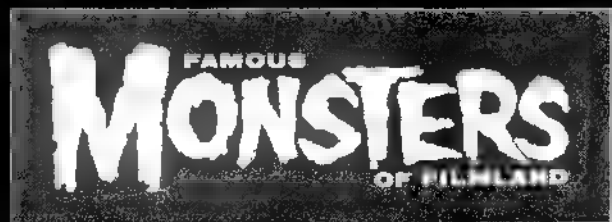
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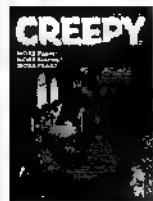
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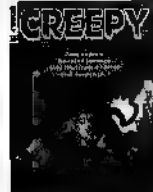
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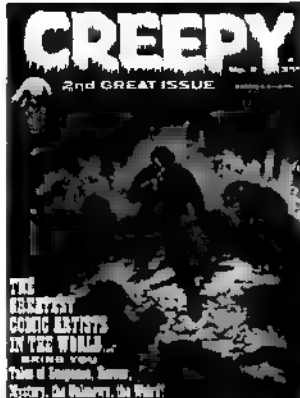
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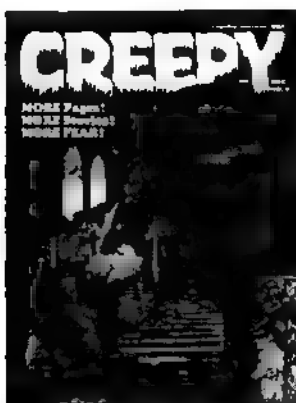
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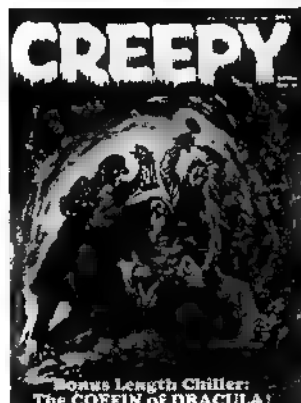
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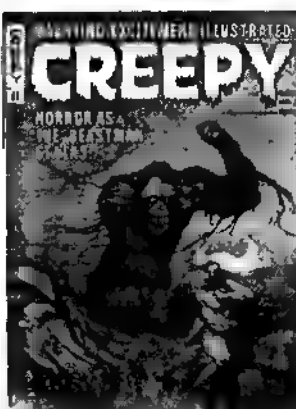
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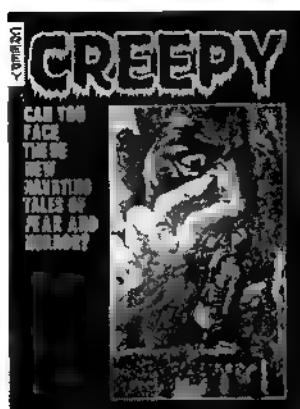
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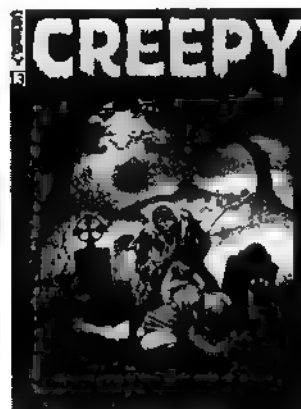
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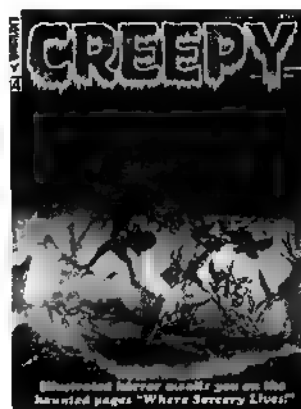
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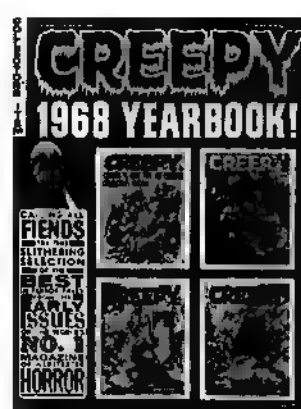
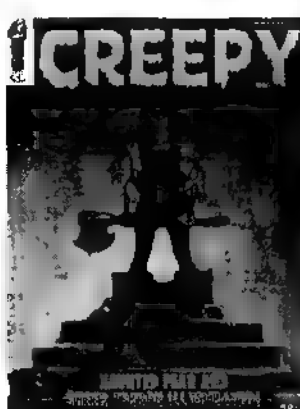
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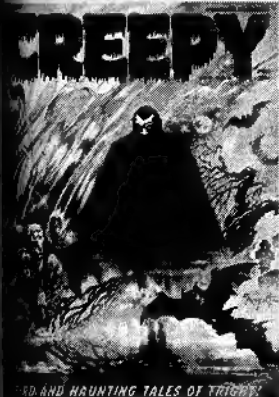


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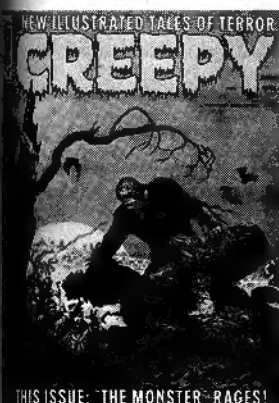


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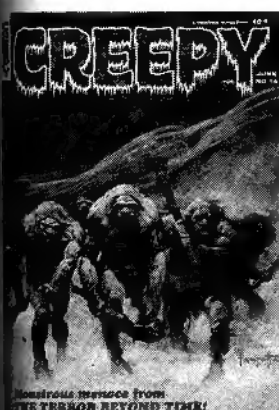


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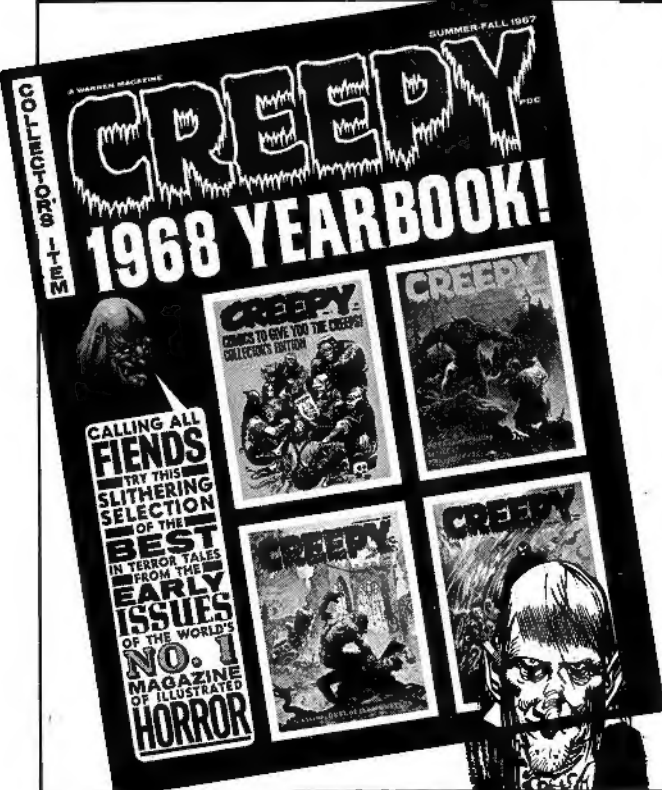
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